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College Days at Ann Arbor: 1865-1868

Edited with an Introduction by F. Clever Bald

HUGH BYRON ALEXANDER, OF GENEVA, ILLINOIS, was eighteen years old when he entered the literary college of the University of Michigan in the fall of 1865. At that time the University had an enrollment of 1205 students, and the number increased the next year to 1225. According to President Erastus O. Haven's annual report, it was the largest student body in the United States.

Buildings on the original forty-acre campus were: the North Wing, or Mason Hall; the South Wing, or South College; the four faculty residences; the Medical Building; the Chemistry Laboratory; and the Law Building, later known as Haven Hall. The observatory was off the campus, about a half mile to the northeast.

The Rev. Erastus O. Haven, a Methodist minister, was president of the University. There were a number of distinguished men on the faculty during the years of Hugh's attendance. Among them were: Alexander Winchell, professor of geology; Andrew D. White, professor of history; Charles Kendall Adams, successor to White in the chair of history; James C. Watson, professor of astronomy; and Moses Coit Tyler, professor of English literature. Alexander Winchell was for a time director of the State Geological Survey; Andrew W. White became president of Cornell University; Charles Kendall Adams was later president of Cornell University and of the University of Wisconsin; James C. Watson was noted for his discovery of asteroids; and Moses Coit Tyler was recognized as an authority in the field of American literature.

The students lodged and boarded in private homes in Ann Arbor, then a town of ten thousand inhabitants. At first, Hugh belonged to an eating club which divided the expense for meals among the members. The cost was usually \$2 a week. Later he and two other students lived together and cooked their own meals. His expense account book contains interesting information about prices of food. Eggs cost fifteen cents a dozen, mutton chops twelve cents a pound, oranges five cents apiece, beefsteak fifteen cents a pound, coffee thirty

cents a pound, and apples two cents apiece. Other prices were correspondingly low. Room rent was \$1.25 a week, and a haircut twenty-five cents. Hugh's account book shows that the total expense for his first two semesters at the University was \$351.22.

Hugh took his work in the engineering department, at that time a part of the literary college. He was a better than average student, especially in mathematics. Although he seems to have given a great deal of time to his books, he also participated in extracurricular affairs. His account book shows that he was a member of the Alpha Nu Literary Society, the Jay Debating Society, the Chess Club, and his class baseball team. Besides, he attended lectures by John B. Gough, Petroleum V. Nasby, Horace Greeley, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Anna Dickinson. In 1869 Hugh received the degrees of civil engineer and mining engineer.

After leaving the University of Michigan, Hugh worked as a civil engineer in the West for a number of years. From 1889 to 1900 he was assistant engineer of the sanitary district of Chicago, and from 1900 to 1904, superintendent of public works for the city. He was president of the Sprague Davis Iron Works in Chicago from 1904 until 1914 when he retired to his boyhood home in Geneva. He died there in 1930.

Many of the letters received by Hugh Byron Alexander and most of the letters sent by him while he was at school in Ann Arbor were preserved in his trunk at his home in Geneva, Illinois. The letters printed here are a selection of the ones of most general interest made by a daughter, Mrs. Helen Alexander Szold of Washingtonville, New York. In addition to the letters, the trunk contained other letters received by Hugh during his college days and later, newspaper clippings about members of his college class, papers and essays, his diploma, college programs, and other memorabilia of his days at the University of Michigan. The trunk and its contents are in the possession of a daughter, Mrs. Margaret Alexander Allan of Geneva, Illinois. I am indebted to Mrs. Szold for selecting the letters and to Mrs. Allan for permission to publish them.

CORRESPONDENCE OF HUGH BYRON ALEXANDER

ANN ARBOR Sept 24 '65

DEAR PARENTS:

I have received your letter of the 21st instant. You can't imagine how glad I was to hear from home. It seems as if it was six months since I left Geneva. Great things, it seems, have transpired since I left. You have had a great festival, Joe has got home, doubled in size, I suppose, and George, that irrespressible George, has returned to the land where his most loving kinsfolks in horrid exile live. If I could put this last expression into Rhyme, I think it would be poetry, don't you? I want you to see Joe's wife immediately, and write a description of her in your next letter and tell me whether you think her a match for her Sovereign lord, or not.

That coat that Joe traded to George, Joe wanted to let Oliver have for \$15, so he must have made quite a "speck" out of George.

You want to know all about my examination and all about my chum and the family with whom I live. In examinations they are very strict, if a person misses one question, in some of the classes, he is conditioned. I got one condition in Grammar, Syntax. When I sat there and heard them as the[y] passed their examinations, I was almost certain that I would be conditioned. There were only one or two who passed the examination in syntax without a condition, and they were classical students. I should have went through, even on Grammar, but for one question. He asked me whether the expression, a setting hen, was proper. I answered that I thought it was. He told me to think it over again; I did so, but couldn't see my mistake; the more I thought about it, the more I got confused, so that at last I could do nothing well. He conditioned me, and I left the room, and before I had got out of the grounds, I saw my mistake. If I had humanized my Polyhemic participle¹ by giving it another eye (i), I should be allright. Now, as it is I shall have to be examined again in two weeks and I don't mean to be conditioned again. I have plenty of company, that is one consolation. My chum has left. He

¹Polyphemus was the one-eyed Cyclops in Homer's *Odyssey*. The "Polyphemic participle" was *setting*. If Hugh had given it another "i", it would have been the correct form, *sitting*.

could not pass the examination without being conditioned in nearly all of them. He is a first rate fellow, and I should have been well satisfied with him. The man's name with whom I board, is Mr. Stringham.² He has been a Methodist minister. The family seem to be a very good one. I think he must have backslid for he doesn't have family prayers and doesn't go to meeting very often.

It has been Raining here all day so I have not been to meeting today. I am going to have a room by myself as I can't find any body that I like for a chum. It is a nice little room, having two windows facing the North. I shall like it first rate. It costs \$1.50 a week and my board will be, when we form the club, about 4.50 or less, so that it will be as cheap as I am boarding now. There are 4 law students and one "medic" boarding here. We are going to get up the club in a few days and then I hope we shall be settled. I think I can get along better alone, and the young men are more experienced and Gentlemanly then meny of the Literary Students.

The Bell is ringing for dinner so I shall have to wind up.

Your Son,

H. B. ALEXANDER

ANN ARBOR Sept 30 1865

DEAR PARENTS:

I received your letter of the 8th the other day but I have been to busy to answer it untill today.

How many boarders do you have, and how much do you charge? I hope enough to keep you in snuff.

I wished you would send those gloves out if you have a chance for it is getting pretty cold here just now.

I went to church last sunday twice and one this sunday. I am not going to the methodist church here any more. I don't like the Preacher.³

At 3 o'clock last sunday we (the students) had preaching in the chapel by Dr. Haven.⁴ He preached a first-rate sermon on con-

²The Rev. Stephen C. Stringham. He lived at 35 Thompson Street.

³The Methodist minister was the Rev. Henry S. White.

⁴The Rev. Erastus O. Haven was president of the University of Michigan from 1863 until 1869. Previously he had been a professor in the University from 1852 until 1856. Dr. Haven resigned in 1869 to become president of Northwestern University. In 1880 he was made a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

science. We have a sermon every sunday and he preaches. He is the only man that I have heard here that is equal to Mr. Griffith. He don't preach but he talks, and of course a person can't go to sleep when he is talked to.

You *think* my "first impression" would be very interesting. I *know* they would be to me and I hope they will hurry up and make themselves known for I haven't discovered any yet. If I ever have any I will send them along by telegraph.

You ask if I have made any acquaintances besides the boarders. (The bell is ringing loudly for supper so I shall have to desist and go down to eat it)—(I have bien to supper and feel a good deal better). I haven't made many. I know most of the boys in my class though.

I haven't much time to make acquaintances, I can tell you. I have to furnish my own wood and lights. I burn about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a quart of Kerosene a week which costs 20 ct. a quart. I haven't burnt but little wood yet and don't know how much it will cost a week for this. I have my washing done in the family and have to pay 60 c. a dozen. My expenses will be at the least calculation \$2.50. Every thing is so high, and I board alone, since my chum went home I haven't found a person that I would have for a chum.

I board a cheap as most of them who live as near the college as I do. I could get boarding cheaper by going over on the other side of the river with the Irish.⁵ I take the "correcter" when I don't feel very well and that is not very often. I haven't taken but $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Bottle yet.

I will write more next time. I have got a letter from Frank.

Your son

H. B. ALEXANDER

ANN ARBOR Oct 1 1865

DEAR PARENTS:

I received your letter of the 27 ultimo Yesterday. I am much obliged for the verses, and I think Anna ought to be very much obliged also. I wish you would write her a letter every week, and send coppies to me.

⁵The "other side of the [Huron] river" was formerly called the Lower Town.

I have so much to remember here, that it will be rather difficult to remember, that "time has no hair on the back part of his head."

You say it rained in Geneva last sunday. It rained here all day and was cold and dreary enough.

Tell Peter that I miss him as much as he does me, and that I would like, very much, to have him for a chum.

I wrote to Mr. Griffith yesterday and I must write one to Frank today.

Anna's Charm works first-rate so far. It does a great deal better than I expected. I had a slight attack yesterday on account of having to write an essay and read it before the class Tuesday next. I sat down and tried to write one but couldn't make it out satisfactorially untill near ten o'clock in the evening. Along about three o'clock, I got so tired that I would have been glad enough if I was safe home again. I feel a great deal better about it today, and I think I will have an essay that will astonish the natives. I have not written it all down yet, but when I get it finished, I will send a copy of it home *if I don't change my mind*.

There are three hours devoted to recitations. First, we recite ten or twelve pages in "Parkers Aids to English Composition". (Its a lucky thing that I brought the "Aids" with me.) Then comes Geometry, and then in the afternoon from three untill four we recite eight or nine pages of "Lord's Modern" History.

Our Club⁶ is full now, there Being 14 persons in it. They are all Lawyers but three, and I am the only Literary student in the Club. The other two are Medical Students. You may think it strange that I should go alone so, but I was the first one here and I have a good room. I was not going to give up a good Boarding place because Medical and Law Students came here. They, who Room in the house with me, are all first-rate fellows excepting [one] who is a good deal like Joe. He is a very ferocious looking Individual, occasioned mostly, if not wholly, by the mustache that he wears, said mustache being made up of ten or a dozen Yellow bristles sticking straight out from his upper lip, as if it was a magnet and the hairs, iron filings.

We can get no good butter in town, and one of the boys, for the

⁶Eating clubs, organized by students, were numerous.

fun of it, went into a large Boot & Shoe establishment and asked if they had any butter to sell.

He was telling about it at the supper table, and this chap who is a Medical Student thought he would say something nice, so he said: "The clerk must have taken you for a big fool." The Law student replied as quick as thought: "No. He took me for a Medic." (Medical Student)

Give my respects to George, and tell him to write. I must quite [quit] for I want to write to Frank.

Your son,

H. B. ALEXANDER

ANN ARBOR Oct 29 1865

DEAR PARENTS:

I wish you would send me a paper once in a while, for I don't see a paper once a month, and I am all in the dark about what is going on in the outside world.

I can't say that I have a very heavy mustache, *for I shaved it off this morning.*

I sent you an account of my expenses, since I have been here. You will find that I have spent over \$100 since I have been here. By looking the account over you will see wheather I have been extravagant or not. The first thing that will attract your attention probably, will be the \$4.00 for a "Pencil case and pen." I *did* buy this when I need not have done it, but you will see by the date that it was the next day after I came here that I got it. I was pretty flush of money then and my chum advised me to get one as he said that it was cheaper than it was to buy steel pens. So I bought it, but I am sorry that I did so now, since I have found how much it is going to cost to take me through. I bought a hat the next day after I bought the pen, for \$3.00, and I think I did better than I would in Geneva; but everything else I think I could do better in Geneva as you will see by looking at the price I paid for my slippers which were the cheapest I could get. I had to pay 3.50 to get my watch fixed. So you see how they fleece the students here. I have not bought any book but what were necessary in my class. I bought the Diary because they had some that I liked, and I didn't know but that they would be gone when I did want one.

We have to have Note Books in the class, so as to take down anything of importance that the Prof. may say. I have a box in the Post Office because there are so many Students here that it makes it very unhandy and tiresome to stop at the wicket half an hour to get ones mail and then not get it. I spent 25c to go to the fair, I having a curiosity to see what they can raise in this part of the world. It was a mighty poor show; why, the Town of Geneva, alone, could get up as good a show as there was at this fair.

I joined a Ball club⁷, for I thought it would be excellent exercise. I bought a pair of shears to trim my lamp with. The load of wood that cost \$1.50 was cut into stove wood and there is a good deal of it soft-wood. I use it for kindling mostly, and use the hickory for common wood.

The only altogether useless expenditure, except the fair is 20c paid for apples. I got so hungry for some apples that I couldn't help getting a few to have a taste. The fees for the University were \$25, \$20 for matriculation fee, and \$5 for incidentals⁸. What the incidentals are I confess I am not prepared to state and I don't believe the *officers* of the University know.

You will see by consulting the "Account" that I have only got \$20 left.

The examinations for scholarships has passed, but I didn't get one. I was not good enough in grammer to get the prize, although I passed the best examination in mathematics of any of them. I am the best in mathematics of any of the students, and there are over 40 in the scientific section, and all of them coming from first-rate seminaries.

H. B. ALEXANDER

GENEVA Dec. 14th 1865.

DEAR BYRON:

Dec. 15th 10 deg below zero. We have been changing stoves today, have got up the elevated oven, and just got warm for the first

⁷Hugh probably joined the Freshman "Ball Club." Each class had a team, and the "First Nine" consisted of eighteen students chosen for their superior ability. The "First Nine" played teams from Ann Arbor, Detroit, and other nearby towns. There were two baseball diamonds on the campus.

⁸Michigan students paid a matriculation fee of \$10; others paid \$20. This fee was paid only once, on admission. No other charge was made except an annual payment of \$5 by all students.

time in two days. This morning the mercury was 7 degrees below zero here, and several degrees lower on the hill. There is no snow, or it would be colder still. Speaking of the weather reminds me that my little boy wants an overcoat. I am very sorry, for I don't see how he is to get one. I was in hopes he would keep up steam by thinking of his education—of the convenience of a shawl—of his brother standing guard for two winters in an army overcoat with only a thin blouse under it—of his mother going without furs—and—lots of things.

Suppose you talk to yourself about the overcoat as I do to myself about the furs, thus; it would be very comfortable—it would look as though I was pretty well off—make me feel quite grand, in fact, and I should like it first rate, but—I can't afford it. I must wait till prices come *down*, or something turns *up*. The three hundred that was going to take you through the year, is half gone already, and our taxes this year are a great deal higher than we expected—lack only a few cents of seventy five dollars. Your father hasn't got a new vest & pants yet—can't afford it. Whats his name that you was reading about last winter you know, went in for wearing drawers instead of overcoats—keeping the feet & legs warm instead of so much about the chest—you'd better try it. The girls are out skating on the pond not dressed so warm as you are without your shawl, and they don't freeze. You ought to be as hardy as a girl. Try and keep your blood in circulation by exercise.

You will observe that I have taken a sheet of foolscap. I have several reasons for so doing which I will proceed to show. First;—to give you a hint as to saving "pennies" your "pounds" will take care of themselves. You have twice sent home a sheet of this size with your accounts written on one side, and the other blank and at the same time mailed a letter of explanations. Now if you had written your letter on the blank, or your account on both sides of a half sheet you would have saved, as near as I can calculate, *ten cents*. Did you ever want ten cents? I have. Second:—I have a great deal to write and can't afford two or three sheets of note paper. Your fathers letters are like Shakespeare, not to be understood by young persons of this generation without 'Notes' He *talked* of selling the farm for 45 dollars an acre, but the purchaser *talked* of giving 40, and Mr. Mabon *talks* of getting 150 dollars for giving it up. So we only get \$3,050

for the place if we sell it. I guess we shall sell it. The interest of the money will bring more than the rent. If we keep the farm, and have to make repairs, and pay taxes, I don't see how we are to keep you at college. Third: I have no other paper. Isn't that conclusive?

I'm afraid your partnership won't work well. I was in hopes your chum was a great deal smarter than you, and better, your superior every way. I told you last winter that your intimates were apt to be knaves or fools. Which is it this time. Perhaps your chum isn't stingy, only saving because his father is like yours, not "flush of money". You must be patient of his peculiarities and he with yours, or you will have an unpleasant time together. I suppose you get the papers.

Jo don't go to the Lodge at all. "A change has come over the spirit of his dream." He has never made a report as F. S.⁹ and 'tis said that some of the funds are missing. Whitely says that it is whispered, not very softly, that Jo is a *Defaulter*. They say he acts strangely, very different from what he did before his marriage. They haven't been here since the Sunday I invited them to dinner. I suppose my chicken pie was so poor that they thought it wouldn't pay to come again. They are moving now, and I shall call soon and see 'what's the matter' and let you know.

The Lodge has no carpet yet, but has a melodian. There have been a good many initiated since you left, and the Lodge is prospering finely on Whitely's hands. Viola Gosper asked me the other day where Byron was that he didn't come to the Lodge. I told her he had gone to Ann Arbor as a temperance Missionary. She wished you success.

I don't believe Frank will go to Ohio. He isn't well, and hasn't finished his job. Do you want the books bad enough to risk sending them by the cars? I wish you could come home Christmas, but we can't afford it.

I don't know as we *can* sell this place, at any price, but if we could sell it, we couldn't get anywhere near enough to build a new house to say nothing of the lot we should have to buy to build on. Then there would be the trouble of setting out trees and fixing generally.

⁹Financial secretary.

So you may as well make up your mind to build your Observatory here. I hope you are getting strong enough for carpenter work, so you can earn something at that next summer if you can't do any better. There will be plenty to do.

Well Byron I have got to write now on a very painful subject. Very bad news. I should like to break to you in a gentle manner—by degrees if I could—but I can't. I shall have to tell it right out. Peter is dead. That is the fact but as to the manner of his death, I can give you no satisfaction. He was around in the morning as usual, and at night your father found his corpus out by the hen house lying stiff and cold. Cut off in the prime of cathood before age had dimmed his eye, or dulled his claws so that he couldn't catch chickens. Peerless Peter!! We ne'er shall look upon his like again. We could have better spared a better cat—Sally Ann, for instance. My mind misgives me that he heard me talking of giving him away, and so, in a fit of disgust with the world, like Ike Partington's cat, he committed suicide. His lying by the hen-house has given me suspicions of another cause of his death. He was very fat, and perhaps he may have got excited trying to catch a chicken, and died of apoplexy. There has been great mortality among cats this fall, most every family has lost one. Sally Ann has lost two of her kittens. One of them your father buried in the same *Hole* with our darling Peter. *Requiscat in pace* Latin for Rest cat in peace. I have coaxed Sally's remaining kitten into the house and am petting it vigorously. It bids fair to be worthy of Pete's place in your affections by the time you get home. I am about through now.

I haven't had paper enough to write all I wanted to before—had to cut my letters short. Foolscap is the kind. Do you like college as well as you expected? Write a long letter.

Goodbye
YOUR MOTHER.

[Postscript written across top of letter]

Your father wants to know what I find to fill this sheet so I read it to him to prove that it wasn't very long. He says its short when its most done.

ANN ARBOR, Dec. 20, 1865.

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:

I received your letter of the 14th instant last Saturday; but as there has been but little to write, and I am naturally lazy, I have neglected to write as usual on Sunday: Besides I got a fit of going to meeting Sunday, and went twice, a thing that surpraes me now as it requires a great deal of effort on my part to go *once* a Sunday. But I do go once because I will not break my word, and not go. I drew up a set of resolutions before I left Geneva, for the better governing of my behavior, and one of them was to go to church once every Sunday at least.

I wish you would use a sheet of foolscap *every* time that you write, and fill it as full as you did in this last. It seems like a home letter ought to be. What do you suppose I care to have a little *letter* done up in a *little* envelop, so as to look like a love letter. If I wanted love letters, I could get plenty of them by writing to the girls. I don't want them in outward appearance only. If I get a letter that looks like a love letter on the outside, I want it the same on the inside. I hope I shall never get any more gilt edged letters from home; but the good honest foolscap well filled with good advice and news and gossip as your last is.

I am sorry that Jo' is suspected of such a misdemeanor as you mention. It looks bad in a newly married man, and would be pretty hard for him if I was there. I guess he wouldn't be quite so fond of laughing at me now.

Our Prof. in history¹⁰ thinks that Government Bonds are the best way to keep a person's money safe these times. I hope you will sell the farm and get some more of the Bonds. You will be safe, I think then; for the copperheads will never be able to repudiate the debt.

Of course I felt very sad over the death of "Poor Peter"; for, although he had his vices like his Namesake Peter the Great, yet his like, I am afraid will never be found, for a good cat. I hope Sally Ann's kitten will be possessed of all the virtues, and none of the vices of his worthy predecessor. I hope you will name it Peter, if "it is of that kind of cats".

¹⁰The professor of history was Andrew D. White. He later became president of Cornell University.

My chum's father and mother are from North Adams, Mass. Is that place any wheres near Springfield? I am going home with Bolles I guess when his school is out. I am almost afraid to too as he has a sister who is a schoolmistress and a pretty cousin living at home. But I guess I must go and try and see what will be the result of such a desperate undertaking in a poor unprotected freshman. Who knows but what I may come to the opinion of my illustrious Brother when he said that he used to think as I do about being a Bachelor but that he had changed his mind now. He (Bolles) has got two mighty pretty sisters and a prettier cousin, just sweet sixteen.

Vacation commenced today, and continues for two weeks. Wont I have some fun in that time? "Echo answers, I reckon." Mr. Bolles owns a nice cutter, and a splendid team and there is first rate sleighing.

You know you told me to get acquainted with a boy who lived in the vicinity so that I could go home with him for the holidays. I have done so. He (the Boy) is somewhat close but he may have a tendency to keep the money in my pocket instead of helping me to get rid of it.

I wish you would send those books into Chicago by Ed and let him check it through. I don't see where there will be any danger. Bolles has provisions sent that way every few days, and always gets his trunk safe. Remember to send all the books I sent for.

H. B. ALEXANDER.

Box 910.

ANN ARBOR, Feb. 12, 1866

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:

I ought, I suppose, make some excuse for not writing you a *longer letter* last week; but I was so very busy preparing for examinations that I could hardly get time to eat my meals. Well, I have passed through the torture unscathed, without a condition, which is more than all of them can say. I did not "pony" a bit either, which is also more than all of them can say. Maybe I had better explain what "to pony" means. A person ponies when he has his text books hid somewhere about his person, when he carries notes on his cuffs,

in his coat sleeves, or in any other convenient place. He also ponies when he gets a seat near another and copies from his papers. But all the ponies that I used were well stabled in my sensorium, as our professor of Physiology¹¹ calls the brain. I only missed one question in the whole examination on paper; and only two in the oral examinations, and we were examined 9 hours.

The second Semester commenced today. We are to study Algebra, History, Botany, and Drawing, and attend two Medical lectures a week. My hours of recitation will be as follows. 9 A.M. to 10, Algebra; 10 to 12, Drawing or Botany; 3 P.M. to 4, History of the United States; and 4 to 5, Monday and Thursday afternoons, lectures on Physiology and laws of health. So you see that I shall not be idle. In History we have about 13 pages for a lesson, in a work as large as the "Great West".

My expenses have been so heavy that my twenty dollars are about played out. I have got 4 dollars left; but that will be gone in a day or two. In the first place, I was obliged to borrow 2 dollars, before the twenty came, of Bolles; of course that left 18; then, I bought my history for 4, which left 14; then, 2 for provisions, 12; then, 2 for washing (I had not payed my washing bill since last November) 10; 2¼ for room rent, 7.75; 1 for lectures, 6.75; 1 for drawing paper, 5.75; 1 for meal, paper, and programme of Juniors, 4.75; 30c for stamp, 4.45. I shall have to buy a drawing board tomorrow, 1 dollar; and triangles 50c; and a work on drawing 1.50; so I shall have left 1.45 to buy wood and provisions with; unless you take pity on the misery of a poor Fresh, and send him one more installment. I study economy hard; (but don't get time to study that interesting subject as much as I would like to) but for "aw that" the money seems to slip out of my fingers like eels. I ment to send you a full account of my finances but I haven't time now. If you will write in your next where I left off, I will continue my accounts. It has been so long since I sent any that I have forgotten where I left off. I have spent 190 dollars this last semester. I shall be able to get through this semester with 80, for my total expenses for rent, provisions, wood, lights, and washing is less than 3 dollars a week, which is 12 dollars a monch, and these expenses will be reduced

¹¹Dr. Corydon La Ford was professor of anatomy and physiology.

when warm weather comes; for then we will not burn so much oil, nor so much wood, and when the Laws and Medics leave, room rent will be cheaper; and the lectures will soon be over; and my instruments and books will soon be all bought.

Give my respects to all the friends and write *very soon* to your son—

H. B. ALEXANDER

I didn't know that the Catalogues were out yet. I guess that Ed. saw a *Palladium*.¹² Can't you send me papers oftener, I like to know the news a little better.

GENEVA NOV 3^d 1866

DEAR BYRON:

I received yours last Tuesday, and, as Ed used to say, was very glad to hear from you.

I am glad your cooking genius has got along, for if McLean¹³ is no better at housework than you are, I think there would be danger of indigestion if no worse. Now I suppose you will live high but I guess you won't sleep very soft. Pity you didn't take your little feather bed and get a cot made. Well, you may comfort yourself with the thought that Napoleon and Wellington both preferred hard beds, at least used them, and it is said the Duke's was so narrow that he couldn't 'turn over' but had to 'turn out'. It is well for you, perhaps, to get used to hardships, for if you get a hand in the Great Pacific (I guess there is one f too many) railway, you may have to come to it.

I'm afraid you've been "flush of money" again, haven't you? At this rate you won't get through on 250. I expect you have been extravagant in the *book* line if no other, and all to make a show in your bookcase!!! When your only mother is forgetting how to spell for want of a Dictionary.

¹²The *Palladium* was the annual publication of the fraternities, first issued in the spring of 1859. Besides pages devoted to the fraternities, it contained information about the literary and other societies, a list of the faculty, and the names of all students in the literary college. In 1897 the *Palladium* was combined with other campus publications to make the *Michiganensian*, the student yearbook which is still published.

¹³Donald A. McLean of Goreham, Ohio, was graduated in medicine in 1867. He was probably Hugh's roommate.

We are getting to feel settled again. I like my little kitchen ever so much. Ed. hasn't occupied his chamber that he made such a time about having for over a month. He hasn't commenced swinging the circle yet.

Gen. Hulbert [Hurlbut]¹⁴ lectured here last Friday night on the 'situation' the Con— but hold on, I am encroaching on the domain of the Geneva correspondent. Like Gen. Butler,¹⁵ Hulbert is willing to kill the fatted calf for the returning prodigal as soon as he has the grace to say "I have sinned etc." but even then he isn't willing to give him all the *veal*.

Joseph is about pulling up stakes—means to be off for N. Y. this week. Oliver is digging potatoes and choring around generally just as you will be when you graduate. Ed. says there is a call for laborers, but no place for gentlemen as the supply is greater than the demand. Mary hasn't found her mission yet, or hasn't set about fulfilling it. I presume her vocation is to teach a school of one scholar but the scholar hasn't turned up.

I went down to see Ellen before she went back. She says they are expecting great things of you and Ed. Luther Conant was out there and told them you was the greatest mathamatician in the country, and the best scholar and altogether a remarkable chap. I am afraid you will find it up hill work not to disappoint your relations. Uncle John and Lewis praised Ed quite as much only in a different way so that Bel is very anxious to see her cousins and commissioned Ellen to report. Poor girl, she didn't see either of you. I tho't you was going to have your picture taken. I want it to send to aunt Margaret. I send you fifty dollars and expect . . . [the remainder of the letter is missing]

¹⁴General Stephen Augustus Hurlbut, a lawyer of Belvidere, Illinois. When the Civil War began, he was commissioned brigadier general of volunteers. Promoted to major general in 1862, he was in the battles of Shiloh and Corinth, and the siege of Vicksburg. He became a Republican leader in Illinois and served in the United States House of Representatives from 1872 until 1876.

¹⁵General Benjamin Franklin Butler of Massachusetts. Before the Civil War he was a lawyer and an active Democratic politician. When the war began, he was commissioned brigadier general of volunteers and led Massachusetts troops to Washington. Butler was a brilliant but erratic person, and his military career was marked by many controversies. After the war he became a radical Republican, opposing Lincoln's mild policy toward the South. An indefatigable officeseeker, he was in Congress from 1866 until 1875, and he was elected governor of Massachusetts after many defeats. Butler finally joined the Greenback Party and was its candidate for president in 1884.

GENEVA Dec 2nd 1866

DEAR BYRON:

I received yours nearly two weeks ago, but I have been very busy, making a new dress, and teething, both events in my life, especially the teething. If you ever read Goethe's Autobiography perhaps you will remember that he was puzzled by hearing himself called *inexperienced* when his poetry was under discussion, and was very anxious to know what was meant by *experience*. One of his college friends gave him the following definition:—"True experience is just precisely when one experiences what an experienced man must experience in experiencing his experience." Goethe was unsatisfied, and another friend undertook to explain that to be experienced one must experience what one does not wish to experience. Accordingly I am now an experienced woman. Three weeks ago I went to Aurora took "vitalised air"¹⁶ and had my upper teeth all extracted, and today I am rejoicing in a new set. Coming to life after taking the "air", and using the new teeth, is where the *experience* comes in. I advise you to take care of your teeth and put off your *experience* as long as possible.

Ed. was home to dinner on thanksgiving day, and went back on the 5 o'clock. It don't cost him anything to go back and forth now. He is off the road one day at a time between each trip, and once in three weeks is off from friday night till the next wednesday. On one of these occasions, he says, he will get a "pass" and make you a visit—go out Saturday and come back monday or tuesday, but he won't favor you with a letter until you write to him.

Ed. was recommended by both parties, and neither said anything to him about his politics so I guess he can keep his office as long as he performs his duties properly, and wants to keep it.

Our new Post office is very convenient for us—it is under Patten's store. Ale. is rather glum. He knows the people don't think much of him.

Mr. Whitaker died quite suddenly. I suppose you saw his death in the Herald. He sold out to Dea. Beebe and there is a hardware store there now. When I get ready to go to Europe, I shall apply

¹⁶Nitrous oxide, popularly called laughing gas, was used as an anesthetic.

I shall apply (I shan't apply twice) to the Herald and if the pay is good, perhaps I shall consent to enliven its pages with the scintillations of my genius. I don't believe they give much for Geneva correspondence. I've written enough for *fame*; I want money now.

Joe has "fetched up" at Cohoes. He hadn't got into any business when he wrote. I wish you would come home and shoot Sally Ann. She has got one of her fore paws smashed up some way so that it has come off, and I'm afraid she'll catch rats, Nevermore.

I don't see the use of sending you any more papers, if you don't get time to read them. Do you take a paper? You said you was going to. I'm getting up a club for the Post. I get 32 for butter here. Guess I won't send just yet. Provisions are coming down, they say (prices I mean); pork has fallen so that Shaw & Alexander won't get rich this year in the pig trade. This is from your

ONLY MOTHER

ANN ARBOR Dec 16 1866

DEAR MOTHER:

I received your letter two weeks ago But have not had time to answer it until now. I am kept as busy as ever though I hope it will not be so much longer. We shall have vacation in a week now and then I shall have fine times I expect. Bolles wants me to make him a visit but I don't believe it will pay, as he was down here a week or two ago and stayed two or three days. I think I shall devote my spare time to reading Dickens' Novels. We have lately added to our society library over 30 volumes of Dickens works and ten or twelve of Bulwers, Gail Hamilton's works, and several new volumes of poetry and solid prose including Robinson Crusoe. Friday evening I got Don Quixote but I haven't commenced it as yet. I am reading Thackeray's work on Snobs whenever I can get a spare half hour. Did you ever read this book? If you haven't I advise you to get it and read it as soon as possible. It is the best thing I have read in a long time. He just slashes the English aristocrats right and left.

I got a letter from Ike Voorhees a few days since. He is in Meriden New Hampshire preparing for College. He says that it will take him seven or eight years before he will be able to earn anything for himself. By the way I am not able to earn *much* at present and am able to spend a good deal. In fact I have spent so much of late that I have not ten dollars to my name. A slight lift of a \$50 bill would be very thankfully received by the undersigned. Robinson¹⁷ says it costs us less than two dollars a week for provisions, lights and wood so that my whole expenses, leaving out books and clothes can't be over \$3.00 a week.

My mattress is not the softest in the world. I think a straw bed add to it would be a little better. If you want to make me a Christmas present you can do it up in a bed tick and send it per Express and I shall be sure to get it. A blanket would not come amiss either these cold nights.

I have lately taken to drinking—coffee. I believe it gives me a better appetite for my French which we recite at eight o'clock in the morning before some of the boys have hardly got their eyes open.

We take the *Detroit Post*, one of the most radical papers in the West I should think by the tone of it, and edited by Carl Schurz.¹⁸

I hope Ed will come out and see me. Tell him I will give him one of the best cups of coffee he ever drank if he will make me a call and is here at breakfast.

I will close this intensely interesting and instructive epistle in the usual way which is as follows

Votre fils,

H. B. ALEXANDRE¹⁹

¹⁷Albert A. Robinson, '69, a roommate. He was later president of the Mexico Central Railway Company.

¹⁸Carl Schurz was a leader in the Revolution of 1848 in Germany. After it failed, he fled to the United States. He campaigned for Lincoln in 1860, and he served in the Civil War as a general. When the *Detroit Daily Post* was established by Senator Zachariah Chandler as a radical Republican paper in March, 1866, Schurz became editor and held the position for a year. Breaking with the Radicals because of their harsh policy toward the South, Schurz gave up the editorship. Later he was a senator from Missouri, and, as a leader of the liberal Republicans, he opposed Grant. Schurz served as secretary of the interior during the administration of Rutherford B. Hayes, and he was a leader in the movement for civil service reform. He died in 1906.

¹⁹Hugh was showing off by writing *Votre fils* instead of your son, and by spelling his name in the French manner.

ANN ARBOR, Jan 2, 1867.

DEAR MOTHER:

I received your letter last Saturday, and father's a few days before, with the draft for 50 dollars. I have had it cashed, and have got the bundle. The express agent said that he hadn't received a bill yet, but let me have it. He said that it had not been paid for, and that I must pay for the express on it. How is that? I don't think that I shall need a bed tick now. The cotton matrass seems to do very well and with the help of the blanket, I think I shall get first-rate, this cold weather. The butter don't go bad, I can tell you, neither does the liverwort. There wasn't much cake left, after the bundle had been open for a few minutes. I see that you think I am in a very bad way, and are going to send that young "P.M. (wich is post master)"²⁰ out here, to see after things a little. Well, send him on and if he doesn't return with his mouth full of praises of my economy, and energetic prosecution of My various and profound text-books on the natural sciences, and the French language, I shall feel as if I had been misrepresented. When are you going to send him? or do you want to have him surprise me in my prodigality. I have looked over my accounts, and I find that I have spent nearly 20 dollars for things not really necessary. I have bought four or five books, and have bought a newspaper every little while. I have bought a pair of slippers, and went to a few lectures, and that is about all, that I *have* spent in that way. The rest was necessary to spend. I have not bought any winter clothes at all, and don't intend to either, if I can possibly help it. I will show Ed. my accounts, and let him report, if you desire it, or I can send you the whole thing By post if you would like to have the accounts. I have had to buy more text Books than I expected, and they are very dear. I am going to answer father's letter Sunday, and tell him some thing on *temperance*.

Your son,

H. B. ALEXANDER

²⁰Hugh's brother Ed was a railway mail clerk.

ANN ARBOR, Jan. 7, 1867.

DEAR FATHER:

I received your letter and the draft the next day after you sent it. But it has been vacation; therefore I haven't had time to write to any body.

You will please find enclosed "that are pictur", that "mom" has been talking so much about lately. It is as good a picture as I ever had taken in my estimation. Give the undersigned your opinion of it. Any suggestions will be thankfully received, and will be duly taken into consideration, in the next edition.

Have you given up taking the Aurora Herald? I haven't had a number for a long time. I am completely in the dark as to what is going on in "Geneva and vicinity". If you are not going to send the "Aurora Herald" any more, you must make up by writing more news. The temperance folks here are having quite a revival. They have found out that [it] is against the law of the State of Michigan to sell alcoholic liquors in quantities less than 2½ gallons, and then the poison must be *taken off* the premises. The Good Templars and the other temperance societies are going to shut up all the "whiskey cellars" and so called resteraunts in town. There are fifty five such places here, in this town. There are at least three in the block where we are holding forth. There is one almost next door to us. I don't believe that there will be one going in three months from this time. They have been all cleaned out of Lansing, the capital of this state. It will be a mighty good thing for the University when they do make a Temperance town of this.

I wished you and mother and Ed. would send your pictures.

Your Son,

H. B. ALEXANDER

GENEVA Feb 3^d 1867

DEAR BYRON:

I received your letter and pictures more than a week ago, but haven't seen anything of "Mugby Junction" yet. I hope you won't follow the footsteps of your brother the P.M., who was going to bring me 'that same' but forgot it until somebody stole it.

So you haven't bought any winter shirts & drawers. I think you are foolish [sic] for yours were only fit for warm weather, and they won't last till Christmas so you will have to buy some anyway and you had better have got them last fall and had the worth of them this cold weather. But perhaps you sing the Landlord of the Half Moon's "Confession of Faith" (vide, Irving's Sketch Book) with the chorus altered in this wise:

"Backe and syde go bare, go bare,
Bothe foot and hand go colde"
But belly and brain shall not complain,
Of fare that is dry and old.

Frank has turned up at last. He made his appearance here last Friday looking very well, and very well dressed. He has been in Cleveland all the time, but not on Tracy St and so didn't get his letters. He sends his love. He thinks you have altered wonderfully—he didn't know your picture. Are those pictures scarce? I want another.

I had a letter from Joe's Mary. She says she is cooking for 9 men with shocking appetites; and Joe sends word that he is up to his eyes in cord-wood. Both send love to you. Mary Ann has got a school at Lodi.

Oliver is attending school here. We have had sleighing now for a good while, and yesterday it snowed all day, so that all-out-doors is very white today—it isn't cold, however.

Another rich man has come to town and bought half the mill. He wants to buy a place to live. Morand has got large house up on the corner and partly enclosed. I shouldn't wonder if Walker buys it. Moore has bought Pindar Ward's place as a present for Lucy, and Ward has bought out Needham, who is going to move away.

Latest

*Le diable est mort.*²¹ If you ever translate that, and it should 'get out', there will be mourning in A.A. I expect. I got my information from a book called the "Cloister and the Hearth" a story of the fourteenth century, by Charles Reade. The hero & heroine were the parents of Erasmus. It is a very good book but if the

²¹*Le diable est mort*—The devil is dead.

above piece of *news* which one of the characters reiterates on all occasions, is true, the secret has been kept a good while.

N. B. Dr. Hall says that people who have *brains in use*, should eat fish as often as twice a week as the best food to repair the waste of its tissues. Those old monks were bookish men, and probably they instituted fasts when only fish must be eaten, wholly on that account.

The statement of your financial affairs that you talk of sending to Ed. will only result in an extra expenditure of postage stamps—better save them. If you want to write to him to air your french, or ventilate your epistolary abilities you can direct to,

Railway P. O.

Chicago & Dixon Air-line

He will be at home next saturday, so he said last thursday when he was here to swear out his papers to send on for his bounty. Every third saturday he is off until the next wednesday, and spends the time at home. So, in the three weeks he spends one sunday in Clinton, the next in Chicago, the third at home.

In one of your letters you asked for your father's & mother's picture I believe. We'll send them when we get some taken if they happen to look well enough to be a credit to you. They take them for \$2.00 a dozen at Batavia, and perhaps I can go there if the sleighing continues long. I haven't had a sleighride this winter yet. Has your throat troubled you any this winter? If you don't get on the Lake next summer you'd better come and finish up those piles of old lumber you left last fall—work that you *like*. Goodbye.

Your mother,

W. L. ALEXANDER

GENEVA Mar. 17th '67

DEAR BYRON:

I received, at the proper time, (i.e. just as soon as Uncle Sam's agents could bring it) your letter, bringing the delightful news that the knight of La Mancha²² may be expected sometime to look after the distressed damsels of Geneva. (There's a secret history to the

²²Don Quixote de la Mancha, hero of the romance by Miguel Cervantes.

construction of that paragraph as there is to most things in this world). In the meantime the Don will have leisure to enter the lists against the Students in defense of the ladies of Mich. who seem to need a Champion to couch a lance for them if we may judge by the papers you sent us. That Oracle²³ is a brilliant little paper, far ahead of the Chronicle²⁴ in quiet humor, and the mighty Soph's may well be proud of it. It treats the 'Ladies' question²⁵ quite after the Don's own heart. I suppose, however, the Soph's exhausted themselves on that number, as I see no promise for the future. Are Dicken's works included in your course this year? No wonder you have to study hard. I read Herbert Spencer in the Post when we lived on the farm. That reminds me that your father went out to Blackberry Friday to buy a farm. He went out on the morning train with Ed. and was to be at home at 5 ½ o'clock P.M. At 10 I locked the doors and went to bed, thinking your father was bringing the farm with him, which caused the delay of the train. He came somewhere among the "sma' hours ayont the twal" but to my grief didn't bring the farm. He had a good visit with Jenkins and considers himself paid for his trouble. They aren't doing much in the shop now and Whitely talks of selling out and going on a farm, and your father ditto. I don't feel in my bones that there is any danger of my going. Frank is circulating among his friends—takes pot-luck with us occasionally, when I endeavor (that word needs an a I believe, and I want a dictionary) to improve the occasion, exhorting him to marry Miss Goss and settle down as a "rolling stone" etc. (I don't believe she'd have him; it would only change her name by adding an r.) He left work and good wages to come out here and loaf. He says he is going to Chicago to work in the *spring*. It is winter here again. Your Prof Winchel writes for the Advocate. In one of his articles he tells us the sun is cooling off,

²³The *Oracle* was an annual published by the Sophomores. The one Mrs. Alexander referred to was the first, issued in 1867.

²⁴The *University Chronicle* was the first student newspaper at the University. Beginning in 1867, it was published fortnightly.

²⁵The "Ladies' question," which was a topic of lively interest at the time, was whether women should be admitted to the University. Although the faculty opposed admitting them, the Sophomores in the *Oracle* argued for it. The first woman student, Madelon Stockwell, was admitted in 1870.

and I expect that's what's the matter.²⁶ Your father is cultivating a taste for the fine arts. He astonished me by bringing home what I supposed to be a map, but which turned out a picture of *The Leader and his Battles*. A life size head of Grant in the centre, and his battles and things for a border—cost 25 cts.—I got a letter from Joe last week. He has moved to Hortenville Vt. He don't tell what he is doing. John Chambers is not expected to live; they think him in the last stages of consumption. I thought you knew that your father and I don't gossip. Mrs. Crary & I do. She tells me, that Mrs. Gulliver told her, that Dr. Eddy is going to be married this spring. He went east last fall, and soon after he returned, a lady came out here and in company with the Dr. took a good look at Geneva, expressed her satisfaction and departed. She has \$35,000 and 3 children. Said to be a very smart looking woman, but fool enough to marry Doc., as Mrs. Gulliver says, is all the gossip I have room for.

YOUR ONLY MOTHER.

GENEVA Apr 7th 1867

MY DEAR BOY:

It seems that my labors to impress upon your infant mind the necessity of hoisting signals of distress before you are "hull down", have been abortive. If I understand your letter you have gone under to the amount of \$12, while the present available funds of the family are reduced to \$22, or thereabouts; 20 of which we send you, hoping the cow will 'come in' in a day or two and relieve us from further embarrassment. It may be two weeks before we can send you any more, so if you are contemplating matrimony (as I expect that will be your next extravagance) please to hold on. We can get some money of Ed. about the middle of this month, enough to relieve your distress permanently, I hope.

They are not doing much in the shop. Whitely is disgusted with the state of affairs, and has advertised to sell out. Of course your

²⁶Alexander Winchell was professor of geology, zoology, and botany. He was state geologist in 1859 and again from 1869 until 1871. Winchell was a voluminous writer and a lecturer much in demand. Many of his papers are in the Michigan Historical Collections of the University of Michigan. The article to which Mrs. Alexander referred was Lecture 8 in a series, "Christian Theology Illustrated from Nature," which was published in the March 6, 1867, number of the *Northwestern Christian Advocate*. Winchell was a devout Methodist.

father will follow suit if he can get a chance. If we could manage it, I think it would be a good plan for us to remove to Ann Arbor for a couple of years, at least as it would [cost] less for us to live together than it does now, and I want you to finish your course if we have to draw upon our principal pretty largely. The less, the better, however. Ed. says there ought to be one smart man in the family, and it saves him a world of trouble if you will take that *role* as it is not in his line. *I think* there ought to be two good Christian men, who make the most of their powers for the purpose of leaving the world better than they found it,—“Leaving footprints on the sands of time” that another, “seeing may take heart again.”

I got a letter from Mrs. DeGroodt last week. They are living in Louisiana, Pike Co., Mo. She writes of the climate and productions in glowing terms, gets enthusiastic over the scenery, talking of mountains, though I suspect they are only hills, for she says one they own contains 10 ½ acres laid out in grape-vines & fruit trees and has a tank on the top for purposes of irrigation. You had better look up its location on the map, for we have a notion of going there for the sake of the fruit, and it isn't so far off as Cal.[ifornia].

I had my photograph taken at the celebrated Cropper's in St. Charles. Competent judges declare that it isn't a great deal *worse* than the one Pratt gave me, but your father says it is. I showed *it* and my *face* to Kimblade last week, and he turned up his nose—promising to take me off to perfection some day this week when the elements are favorable. No pay if satisfaction isn't given. A very important election came off last week. Uncle Tim is supervisor; Bro. Robertson, Justice; Mr. Pennock, Collector; Geo Watson, clerk.

Luther Conant has come home again. He has experienced religion. Staid in Class today. Mary was at home last week—vacation—she goes back to Lodi tomorrow. She sends her cousinly regards.

When do you expect to know whether you get on the Survey or not? If you don't get the position, you'd better come home unless you are certain of making a living there, as I want you to help clean house. There are premonitory symptoms of spring today, for a wonder, which makes me think “Cla'ring up time” is coming.

YOUR ANXIOUS MOTHER

W. L. ALEXANDER

ANN ARBOR June 2 1867

DEAR FATHER & MOTHER,

I have received notice that I have been appointed on the Lake Survey.²⁷ I got the letter yesterday. You may believe that I was glad for I shall have a chance now to earn 150 or 180 dollars this vacation clear of all expenses. I had about given up all hopes of getting the place and had written to a man in Lansing for a position on a survey of that city, but I don't want it now if he should give me a chance there. Ed. can give up hunting a place for me. (*I have no doubt that he has spent a good deal of (precious!) time in searching for a place*)

I shall start next Thursday June 6 up the lakes. I am going on board the *Ada* and my destination is to the western part of lake Superior, or more definitely on that part of the South coast west of Keweenaw point, and will be almost exactly north of Geneva. It is right in the Copper and silver region that has become so celebrated of late. I may pick up a bunch of silver while I am up there that will make me able to pay father back the money he has been spending on me while here. I think it is very probable, especially as silver is so abundant. I should think they could run things on specie basis up there. O. N. Chaffee²⁸ is the Commander of my party and Robinson tells me that he is a very fine man and one that will do anything for a fellow that he has a liking for.

I shall leave my things with Bolles so I shall have no trouble with regard to them.

I shall need some more money I guess. I want some in my pocket after all my expenses are paid, for emergencies. I shan't be here to get your letter, so you had better send 15 dollars to me, and Rhodes²⁹ will get it. (I shall borrow 15 dollars of him.) I have ten now, but I have yet to buy a good pair of boots, and hat, and a pair of overalls.

When I learn what my address will be, I will write and let [you] know. My time will be spent on the water making soundings. I

²⁷During the summer of 1867, the United States Army Engineers had three ships on Lake Superior taking soundings and setting up triangulation stations for surveying.

²⁸O. N. Chaffee was "principal assistant" in charge of the survey party on the steamer *Ada*.

²⁹Daniel H. Rhodes received the degree of civil engineer in 1869.

shall take my meals on the steamer and sleep there so that I will not take any bed clothes along with me.

I am sorry that Ed won't be able to see me this summer, but he can come out next fall when I return and we will have a gory [?] time. I suppose I shall have a great many very strange adventures up there on the lake. I think I will be able to write in opposition to Cobbs "Scrap from an Old Sailors Log Book". I wonder if the Advertizer wouldn't like to publish them.

I haven't anything more to offer at present, so I will wait till I get on the boat and go sailing up the lakes. I shall have lots to write then.

Your Son

H. B. ALEXANDER
ASSISTANT U. S. L. S.

LITTLE ADA
NEAR TRAIN RIVER
June 11 '67

DEAR FATHER & MOTHER;

I left Detroit last Saturday morning at one o'clock, and so we are now a few miles west of Grande island or the Pictured rocks going 10 miles an hour for Marquette, 30 miles distant. We reached lake Huron about noon Saturday, and Sunday morning at 10 o'clock A.M. we were on the St. Mary's river in among the island and pine country. We passed the river in about 7 hours and had a very pleasant trip indeed. The scenery is very beautiful and some of it grand, especially a few miles below the rapids of St. Mary near a place called Churchville.³⁰ We rode alnight on lake Superior, and at 8 o'clock Monday morning we reached Williams' on Grande Island, Passing the pictured rocks. I think that rock that looks so much like a vessel is the prettiest picture of them all. Castle rock is grand old rock. I had a good chance to look at it and was not so much disappointed with it as I had been with some of the others. Part of it is no finer

³⁰Churchville was a village situated near the northeast extremity of Sugar Island in the St. Mary's River.

or grander than that ravine between Aurora and Batavia, and the said scene is not the poorest part of the pictured rocks either. We land[ed] a party right near castle rocks, and I had a good chance to contemplate it. We came back and staid all night at Williams³¹ and I saw the old man, for a few moments. He has quite a large house, [as] large as our upright part, but I can't see what he wants so much room for. He lives there all alone. Won't let his son live with him because his children make too much noise. This son lives in a little cottage down near the dock and has one the finest little boys I have seen this many a day. He ought to be educated. There is no school within 50 miles of this place, but Junior Williams said that there would be one established in a few years by the time his son grew up to need a school.

There are four or five indian families here and live in their regular indian tents shaped a good deal like the esquimaux huts. Some of them have large cooking stoves in these tents, and there are 7 or eight persons in the tent besides several dogs, a few chickens, and any quantity of fleas. Their tents are no larger than a small round summer house, and if they were about twice as tall would look a good deal like them. I can't see how they can keep warm in winter in such tents. I saw one old codger building a canoe. He was in full dress, I should judge, for he had an old pair of pants on and a shirt which [he] wore like a *woman's without the belt*. I saw another old fellow that had been blind twenty years. He was lying flat on his back doing some sort of work. His *wife* was sitting beside him mending some rent pants of her darling son's who just entered the tent as I pulled my noodle out. These indians can't speak English; at least the "son" couldn't. The Indians are all Methodists on this island, while on the mainland they are all Catholics. Old Williams said they would steal, but when we got down to his son's house the son told us they wouldn't steal. Which are we to believe? I don't know myself and would like your opinion on the subject, as both are historical personages now.

³¹Abraham Williams, a native of Vermont, who had been living in Fulton County, Illinois, settled on Grand Island with his wife and eight children in 1840. He was a fur trader. Williams died in 1873 at the age of 81.

This morning after sleeping (and the mosquitoes were working and singing sweetly the while. They just live here and don't die) soundly we got up and bade adieu to Williams' Harbor and started for Train River to land a party, which we have done, and now we are bound for our own work as fast as we can. I will tell you in another letter about the boat and our party.

Please send me 5 dollars next time you write. It has cost me more than I expected to get ready, and I haven't bought all yet. I have only a little over 2 dollars here, and that's not enough on the boat, for we shall be in towns once in a while, and I want a little spending money. I don't want to be completely dry in pocket then. I hope you sent that \$15 dollars right away so that Mr. Rhodes has got it by this time.

We have had a splendid passage all along; no storm of any kind while out of harbor. I haven't had the least sign of sickness. Our work will be on the east shore of Keweenaw Point instead of the west.

Your Son

H. B. ALEXANDER

Direct to

H. B. ALEXANDER

U. S. Str. "Little Ada"

Portage Entry

MICH.

Care of Earl Edgerton

L[AKE] S[URVEY] STR "LITTLE ADA"

June 26, 1867

DEAR MOTHER,

I received your letter and the papers day before yesterday. The money came allright. I did not get your letter with the money but my chum did. I sent the papers and magazine just before I left.

Since I wrote to you last I have had the pleasure of climbing two or three mountains. I enjoyed it very much. I like such work if I do not like more useful and easier. I have picked out that island on which I am going to stick up my "palatial residence". Huron island is the name of it.

(June 30 '67)

I didn't feel like writing when I commenced this letter so I gave it up until a more agreeable fit should throw me into a more literary state of mind.

We have been hard at work for the last two days making observations on three stations about 20 miles apart. I can see the stations with my naked eye at that distance in the morning and evening, the atmosphere is so clear and steady. Yet the stations are not more than half as large as your kitchen.

The scenery is not very romantic here, but it is wild enough. Woods of beach and birch and evergreens are so dense that you can hardly force your way through, and it [is] in this state all over the country. Even where the standing trees will let you pass, the fallen trees moss covered and decayed which have fallen in all directions with their great branches sticking out make a labyrinth worse than the famous one of Crete. I tell you it take[s] the fat right off a man and makes his muscle as hard and tough as one of their old knots. If the mosquitoes and blackflies would let me alone, I would enjoy it amazingly. It don't go so bad as it is, however, and the "insects" won't last always.

The rocks are mostly "old red sandstone" and granite. Huron Id. is one mas[s] of granite piled up 200 feet, I should think, with fine old evergreens growing on the sides of the hill, holding on by sending their strong roots into the crevices of the rocks, or winding them around and under some huge boulder, content with the little soil that has accumulated by the slow wearing away of the rocks and the moss that covers their nakedness. I traveled around the shore of this island and saw some pretty fine sights. There was a rock on the outer edge of a level part of the shore which attracted my particular attention. I called it the "Pulpit". It stood up there in front of the level part so like an old fashioned three story pulpit. It's dimensions are about 75 feet wide, 25 feet long, and 50 feet high, I should think.

I climbed to the top of it and found some Columbine in flower on its otherwise very bald pate. It would be just the place for Henry Martin to have "spoken his piece" in, with nobody to listen to his eloquence but the gulls who, I have no doubt, would have cheered up his modest spirits with great applause and "encored" him till he would get sick of his own masterly production.

I wonder how Henry thinks he is going to make a lawyer of himself if he has to be excused from speaking his thesis. I see by the Chicago Tribune of June 28 that out of ten graduates he alone was to[o] bashful to make his appearance as orator. I supposed that he would be able by this time to equal Webster or Henry, or at least get off something as good as Cicero and Demosthenes were wont to regale those old heathen. He has been studying so earnestly and with such apparent success.

I told you that you might expect something about the boat and her crew in this letter.

Our boat was once a rebel, I am sorry to say, but like most converted rebels of sense she is a downright radical now and goes in for congress in a way that would gladden your heart.

She was a blockade runner till Sherman overhauled her near Wilmington, N. C. She was made near Glasgow, Scotland, in 1863 for the rebels and was successful in running the blockade once, and nearly so a second time. She worked hard for the rebs while she was with them and did them a good deal of good. But war was not her forte, so she entered the Coast Survey and has become famous as a savant or rather savantess.

Her crew at present are 1st Assistant Chaffee, 2d Assistant A. F. Chaffee,³² and Recorder Alexander of the Survey, the Captain, his mate, and 25 men. The three first occupy a cabin by themselves. A very good cabin too. We have a bathroom, washroom, and places to put our thing[s]. I believe they call them lockers. Then there is a bookcase with a good supply of books, and several other *very convenient things around*. I have got to close in a hurry, for we are to leave in five minutes [for] the Portage.

Your Son

H. B. ALEXANDER

³²A. F. Chaffee was an "assistant" in the survey party. One of his duties was to draw maps, incorporating the data gathered by the surveyors.

ANN ARBOR April 5 '68

DEAR FATHER,

Your letter with \$20 came without apparent interception from curious postmasters, I am happy to say, for strange as it may appear to you I was mighty glad to get a little money in my all devouring and Chronic dissentery wallet.

We have been having fine (Winter) weather here for a couple of days. It snowed all day yesterday, and it has not gone off yet. This will put a damper on the farmers I think here. I hope this weather does not extend to Old Kane. I don't want those apples, hickory nuts, butternuts, currants, grapes, &C, &C, nipped in the bud, for that would not only give you the blues but destroy my hopes of a feast when I go home next fall to vote for Grant & Colfax. I want you to registrar my name so that I can vote without trouble when I get home. I suppose you know nothing about politics now, but talk learnedly on cattle and twins, Speak with authority on Chester Whites with expectations, and despise all intercourse with the outside world. Nevertheless I think you must have heard doubtful rumors of the trial of Andy Johnson³³ for high crimes and misdemeanors in your hermitage, and I think those rumors must have influenced mother in the conclusion the whole affair will end in one grand fizzle. For if you had received true and unbiased reports you must have seen that the Senate and House are in earnest in this matter and that Ben Wade³⁴ is besieged by office-seekers already. Seems to me they are going ahead with the trial very fast and successfully.

The election or vote on the new constitution³⁵ come off[f] in this State tomorrow. The Good Templars are going to vote for a Prohibitory law to be incorporated therein. I think it will be doubtful as to their success in the matter.

³³President Andrew Johnson was impeached by the House of Representatives in 1868 for high crimes and misdemeanors and tried by the Senate. Although the charges were trumped up for political purposes, the President was acquitted by only one vote.

³⁴Benjamin Franklin Wade was a senator from Ohio. A radical Republican, he opposed Lincoln's policies toward the South, and he was a leader in the attempt to remove Johnson from office.

³⁵In 1867 a convention made a general revision of Michigan's Constitution of 1850. It was rejected at the polls in 1868. A separate section which would have prohibited the sale of alcoholic beverages was also rejected.

The Good Templars find it rather up hill business to work in this town. There are three lodges, yet there are 72 Saloons here in full blast. The Good Templars are going to shut down on these establishments completely when they get the Prohibitory clause in the Constitution of the State.

I am Studying Chemistry, and I learn that stables must be kept clean or a gass will generate called ammonia, which is very unhealthy for horses to breathe, causing an irritation of the coating of the windpipe and the lungs, which at last ends in consumption.

Tell Ed. from me not to work to[o] hard.—Well it is time for me to retire to my respective place of abode, so good night

Your dutiful son

H. B. ALEXANDER

The Michigan Sportsmen's Association: A Pioneer in Game Conservation

Eugene T. Petersen

AS A TOURIST ATTRACTION WILDLIFE RESOURCES have a value which is obvious today to most people of Michigan. The tourist industry is the second largest in the state in economic importance; therefore, there is little lack of interest in measures designed to conserve or to increase Michigan's wildlife population. It behooves every citizen of the state to help obtain the most intelligent protection and use of all game birds and animals.

However, before the advent of the tourist industry, but one small group in Michigan evidenced an active interest in the protection of game. That group was composed of a number of sportsmen, most of them wealthy and influential, who were concerned for the future of the sports of hunting and fishing which they enjoyed. During the 1870's and 1880's, through the Michigan Sportsmen's Association, these individuals played a major role in conserving the game of that day and, what is more important, in establishing basic policies which were to characterize state conservation efforts for years to come. Furthermore, they were first to realize that the success of such efforts depended upon the consent and support of all the people of the state.

Lack of public sympathy was the major obstacle the sportsmen themselves encountered; even their most substantial gains fell short of the mark because of this general indifference. However, ultimately their views were to prevail, and Michigan was to be transformed from a laggard in wildlife conservation to a leader whose achievements rank second to none in the nation.

Such policies as the state had adopted prior to 1875—the date which marked the establishment of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association—had been designed to afford some protection to game animals and birds. Seasons had been set for certain species, steps had been taken to outlaw the more destructive methods of hunting, and some attempt had been made to regulate the possession and transportation of game out of season.

In 1859 deer, turkey, woodcock, partridge, pheasant, quail, otter, and certain ducks had been protected during stated times of the year.¹ Four years later, similar protection was given elk, geese, swans, and beaver.² A statute of 1865 completely protected all song birds, with the exception of the blackbird.³ By 1869 further steps included the protection of muskrat and muskrat houses along the Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie shores.⁴

In addition to these acts establishing seasons, a number of measures had been passed which were designed to conserve game by other means. Through a provision of the 1859 law, it had been made illegal to sell protected game out of season. This was reinforced ten years later when railroads were forbidden to transport game out of season.⁵ The legislators sought in 1863 to prevent unwarranted destruction of game by prohibiting the use of the damaging swivel or punt gun and by outlawing the hunting of deer with dogs.⁶

Together these measures had constituted Michigan's earliest wildlife conservation effort. The acts had obvious merit, but because legislators had little idea of what the eventual problem would be or of how the game might eventually be used, it was difficult for them to formulate a long-range policy.

Thinking sportsmen realized that existing measures were inadequate. Their immediate complaints may be summarized in four general categories: unwise seasons; inadequate restrictions of hunting methods; failure to control market hunting; and lack of enforcement.

One of the unwise seasons objected to was that for woodcock, which allowed hunting of this bird during the mating season. This ridiculous law remained on the statute books until 1881. As another example, the long season established for prairie chicken, from September 1 to January 1, had not offered that excellent bird enough

¹Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1859, 481-83 (Lansing, 1859).

²Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1863, 411-13 (Lansing, 1863).

³Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1865, 571 (Lansing, 1865).

⁴Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1869, 1:187 (Lansing, 1869).

⁵Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1869, 1:212.

⁶Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1863, 411-13.

protection so that by 1875 the species was rapidly disappearing from Michigan.

Destructive methods of hunting which the sportsmen believed ought to be outlawed included the hunting of deer at night by means of a light and the killing of deer in the water. The netting of passenger pigeons was another undesirable practice which was not regulated.

The evils of market hunting were of primary concern to the sportsmen. Under existing laws any amount of Michigan's wildlife could be taken during the season, sold, and transported out of state. As a result Michigan had become a favorite hunting ground for the professional hunters who sold this game to eastern markets. Moreover such hunters frequently were the worst violators of existing game laws.

The most important weakness of the state's policy, according to the sportsmen, was that only the slightest attention had been paid to the enforcement of protective legislation. The game laws provided fines or imprisonment as penalties for infractions, but rarely were such penalties evoked. Enforcement was left to regular local agencies. Many local officers were not interested in taking on additional duties, and many others realized that to enforce such laws strictly might jeopardize their social or political position in the community. This consideration was of major importance because it dramatized the fact that game protection laws were doomed to failure unless supported by an enlightened citizenry.

It was because of the above-listed objections to current policy and because of their desire to see a well-founded and far-sighted conservation program adopted that various sportsmen's groups in the state determined to join together in 1875 to work toward that end. As a class sportsmen have always felt that they have a great deal in common. They enjoy discussing the methods of hunting and fishing and the results of their pursuit of game and fish. The sportsmen of Michigan of the 1860's and 1870's had been no exception, and so it had not been uncommon for them to form local clubs or game protective associations. As a means of spending idle hours in convivial good fellowship, these local groups undoubtedly accomplished their end. However, when the problem of providing better state conservation laws and policies became uppermost in the minds of the more

far-sighted sportsmen, the inadequacy of local organization was readily apparent.

Existing regional groups were primarily social in nature, lacked efficient organization, and often tended to reflect only local problems of conservation rather than state-wide problems. The desire to devise means for the better protection of Michigan's wildlife was one that transcended locality and called for unified support by all the sportsmen's associations.

Accordingly the Michigan Sportsmen's Association was established late in April, 1875. The initial action of calling together representatives of local state clubs was taken by the Kent County Sportsmen's Club. In response to the plea of this Grand Rapids group, ten sportsmen's organizations sent representatives to a meeting in Detroit. Those represented in the organizing convention were the Allegan County Sportsmen's Club, Battle Creek Sportsmen's Club, Baw-Ko-Tung Club of Grand Rapids, Bay County Sportsmen's Association, Saginaw Club, Kent County Sportsmen's Club, Lake St. Clair Fishing and Shooting Club, Morenci Club, Mt. Clemens Hunting and Fishing Club, and the Ecorse Fishing Club.⁷

At this meeting a constitution was drawn up, and the objectives of the group were clearly stated:

This association is organized for the purpose of securing the enactment of judicious and effective laws for the protection, at proper times, of wild game of fur, fin and feather whose flesh affords nutritious food and the pursuit of which furnishes a healthful recreation, and also all the birds that assist the agriculturalist and the horticulturalist in the protection of their crops, by the destruction of noxious animals and insects, and the enforcement of all laws for such purposes.⁸

With these ideals in mind the Michigan Sportsmen's Association established committees to better accomplish its goals. A committee on laws had for its particular function the writing of bills which could be presented to the state legislature. A second committee was concerned with studying the enforcement of conservation acts, while a third dealt with the nomenclature and habits of wildlife. Although the constitution made no specific reference to placing the activities

⁷*Transactions of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association for the Protection of Fish, Game and Birds*, [6] ([East Saginaw], 1878).

⁸*Transactions of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association for the Protection of Fish, Game and Birds*, 7.

of the association before the public, it was significant that a publishing committee was provided for in that document.

The association was fortunate in attracting a number of individuals who were to make outstanding contributions to its work. In 1876, the year after its founding, Dr. Ezra S. Holmes of Grand Rapids was elected president. His good sense and abilities were responsible for keeping the organization on a high intellectual plane so that no one should doubt its serious purposes or claim it to be merely another social club. Henry B. Roney of East Saginaw, who served as secretary during the early years, was to have much to do with the success of the campaign against market hunting. Cyrus W. Higby of Jackson was to perform the important function of acting as the group's first state "game warden." William B. Mershon of Saginaw was ultimately to be distinguished not only as one of the state's leading sportsmen, but as one who until his death in 1943 consistently fought for better wildlife conservation. He was elected secretary of the association in 1881 and held the office a number of years.⁹

The association grew in numbers and importance as more local clubs established throughout the state became affiliated with it. The *Midland Independent* reported that an association for the protection of game was organized there the first week in September, 1877.¹⁰ In January, 1878, local sportsmen founded another at Muskegon,¹¹ and in August of the same year an East Saginaw Association was established.¹² At the direct instigation of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association over twenty new local clubs were formed in 1882.¹³

The goals of the organized sportsmen reflected their particular concept of the value of wildlife. It was only natural that they should think primarily of the opportunity for recreation which it afforded. Although this concept was clear enough to the members of the state group, they soon found that it was going to be difficult to break down the traditional idea that game and fish were useful mainly for their

⁹William B. Mershon, *Recollections of My Fifty Years Hunting and Fishing*, 98 (Boston, 1923).

¹⁰*Midland Independent*, September 6, 1877.

¹¹*Forest and Stream*, 9:490 (January 31, 1878).

¹²*Forest and Stream*, 9:30 (August 16, 1878).

¹³*Sixth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 42-43 (East Saginaw, 1883).

economic value, an idea which they felt was certain to lead to the complete destruction of the wildlife supply unless its current application could be curbed and prudently regulated. They particularly deplored the extensive activity of professional hunters who invaded the state during all times of the year, killed deer and other game in large numbers, and transported the meat to eastern and midwestern city markets. The sportsmen realized, too, that within the state there was considerable slaughter of deer to supplement the diet of lumbermen.

Hunting for out-of-state markets was believed to be the most serious threat, and legislation to restrict it should have been the most likely to appeal to the people of Michigan and to their elected representatives at Lansing. Accordingly a bill to prevent the export of game from the state was carefully drawn up by the association and modeled after one already in operation in Illinois and Ohio. However efforts to obtain its passage by the legislature were unsuccessful both in 1877 and 1879.

John Burleigh, who had been assigned the task of working for the bill in Lansing in 1877, reported to the sportsmen assembled at Battle Creek in 1878 the reason for its failure. The bill was killed in the Senate because the president of that body believed that the measure would be unconstitutional and, in using his vote to break a tie, voted against the bill.¹⁴ When the bill was reintroduced and passed in 1879, Governor Charles M. Croswell vetoed it. Using the same argument that had been presented in the legislature two years earlier, he stated that he was fully convinced the act was so clearly an interference with interstate commerce that it would fail to accomplish the desired result.¹⁵ The sportsmen failed to appreciate the constitutional scruples of the president of the senate and the governor. At their 1880 meeting they passed a resolution of regret that Governor Croswell had not allowed the constitutionality of the measure to be decided by the Supreme Court.¹⁶

¹⁴*Transactions of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association for the Protection of Fish, Game and Birds*, 21.

¹⁵*Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan*, 1879, 2046-47 (Lansing, 1879).

¹⁶*Third Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 39 (East Saginaw, 1880).

These early defeats spurred the sportsmen to greater efforts. To increase their chances of success, they felt it was necessary to present some factual evidence of the seriousness of the situation. They had previously stated their case in general terms and given only a few scattered instances of specific evils. Burleigh, for instance, had claimed in 1877 that the deer of the state were being slaughtered and shipped by the carloads, that game birds were rapidly becoming extinct, and had asked:

Should this ruinous drain continue, how long will it be before the food of the hardy pioneer will disappear and the State be called upon to appropriate money for the purpose of experimenting in the replenishment of a loss which judicious legislation can now stop?¹⁷

Roney had indicted not only the market hunters but also those who destroyed wildlife simply for the sake of destruction. He deplored the fact that boys and young men often shot anything in sight, and he referred to the "piggishness of sportsmen (?) and sports-women. . . ." He personally knew of a party of four from Chicago who had taken three thousand grayling from one of Michigan's streams and shipped two thousand to their home city. Another party, Roney reported, had taken five thousand grayling back to the same city. One cause of this unwarranted destruction, he believed, was the prevailing policy of newspapers to give publicity to the numbers of wildlife taken by so-called sportsmen. Roney admitted, however, that lack of reliable statistics precluded showing "to what extent this disgraceful greed for numbers [was] . . . carried."¹⁸

Statistics were what the sportsmen needed, and, since the problem of market hunting was the major one, Roney determined to make a further and more complete search into the extent of that practice. By the time of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association's annual meeting in 1881, he had completed his study and was ready to present a paper embodying his findings and conclusions. It was the first scientific attempt to determine the use made of the state's wildlife resources.¹⁹

¹⁷*Transactions of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association for the Protection of Fish, Game and Birds*, 21.

¹⁸*Transactions of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association for the Protection of Fish, Game and Birds*, 22-25.

¹⁹Roney's report occupies pages 49 to 68 of the *Fourth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association* (East Saginaw, 1881).

Roney was particularly interested in knowing the extent of the deer kill in Michigan in 1880 and in establishing the use made of this game animal. To obtain his data he relied upon reports of state sportsmen, personal talks, letters from settlers, newspaper articles and railroad shipping receipts. These were the only means available to him. Although his conclusions in regard to the number of deer destroyed may be open to question, there is no doubt that his research revealed some pertinent facts regarding market hunting in Michigan.

To supply their demand for deer, he found lumber camps, meat markets, and tanneries relied on the professional market hunter. Information Roney received showed that some of these hunters were remarkably efficient. Dick Parrish of Roscommon County, for example, claimed to have killed eighty-one deer in the fall of 1880. The *Ogemaw Herald* reported that a party of five had taken thirty-four deer in a month during the previous season. The same newspaper revealed that Eugene and James Atherton had received \$650 for their hunting activities in one season. Between them 137 deer were obtained. The latter hunter at one time killed five deer in a single forenoon. From the *Detroit Evening News* came the report that Jack M. Cullen and Pat Moore of Oscoda were responsible for killing 156 deer in the 1880 season. Perhaps Chase Benjamin of Alpena could rank with Buffalo Bill, his contemporary, in total count, for the *East Saginaw Courier* reported that Benjamin had killed 2,468 deer in the twenty-nine years he had been a resident of the state. The editor of the *Bay City Tribune* told Roney that if he had known the sportsman was interested in market hunters, he "could have clipped enough from the northern exchanges to have made a book."²⁰

A large number of the deer killed were shipped to southern Michigan cities and to metropolitan areas out of the state, Roney claimed. He went on to assert:

It is a well-known fact to every traveller on the Mackinaw Division of the J. L. & S. R. R. that the train from the north during the hunting season frequently has to attach two or three extra freight cars to carry deer carcasses. . . . The great bulk of these are shipped to other States.²¹

An examination of the books of the railroad revealed that most of the deer shipped on the Mackinaw division of the Jackson, Lansing,

²⁰*Fourth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 50-51.

²¹*Fourth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 52.

and Saginaw Railroad came from Roscommon, Beaver Lake, West Branch, Summit, and Standish. From these points there had been shipped well over a million pounds of venison in 1880, or over ten thousand deer. Moreover, since reports were not available for ten stations north of Bay City on this line, Roney concluded that the total amount shipped would actually have been much greater. Shipments on other state railroads in the Lower Peninsula and on those in the Upper Peninsula would further swell the total.

The deer killed were used principally for food in lumber camps and in state or out-of-state markets. However, traffic in deer hides was also large, Roney discovered. There might have been some justification for the slaughter, he felt, if the venison served to supplement the diet of the people of Michigan, but he could find no excuse for destroying this animal solely for the value of the skin. In the north deer were often attacked with knives while yarding in the deep snow. The hide was then sold at the railroad station for \$1.00 to \$3.00. A single fur buyer obtained 1,500 hides in the summer and fall of 1880. Another, from East Saginaw, informed Roney that he had purchased 4,500 deer skins in the same period.

Newspaper accounts assembled by Roney reinforced these statements. The *Au Sable* and *Oscoda News* claimed one thousand deer hides had been obtained in that area, and the *Detroit Evening News* reported that Blackburn and Company had purchased machinery to make gloves and mittens in Alpena, "where deerskins are cheap and plenty the year around."²² This reference to the unlawful access to deer hides was supplemented by an informant who told Roney that skins were tanned all summer at a tannery in Grayling. The individual had personally counted forty fresh skins in the establishment in August.

The use of venison for food both in and out of the state and the apparently wide demand for hides led Roney to conclude that the destruction of deer reached astounding proportions in 1880. He readily admitted that his total figure was determined by estimate and based upon what scattered information he received from railroad shipping points, lumber camps, and deerskin buyers. However, he felt that he had made adequate allowances for errors and unknowns and that his estimates were, if anything, too low.

²²*Fourth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 51, 69.

His estimate was that seventy thousand deer had been killed in Michigan in 1880. Of these, two thousand had been killed on the west shore and shipped out of Michigan, and four thousand killed on the east shore and shipped out of state. Four thousand deer had been killed in the Oscoda section alone. Twenty-one thousand had been shipped over these railroads: five thousand over the Flint and Pere Marquette, six thousand over the Grand Rapids and Indiana, and ten thousand over the Jackson, Lansing, and Saginaw. The deer killed for hides alone amounted to ten thousand; those killed for lumber-camp use to twelve thousand. The Upper Peninsula slaughter was twelve thousand.²³

An evaluation of these conclusions is difficult, if not impossible. Undoubtedly the practice of market hunting flourished in the state. The widespread nature of the reports and the absence of contradictory information indicates that fact. Furthermore, the killing of deer out of season was a clandestine affair not generally publicized by those who engaged in it. There may have been seventy thousand deer killed in 1880, and there may have been more or less. The exact figure is not too important.

Of considerable significance, however, is the use made of Roney's facts and estimates by the members of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association in expressing renewed demands that the state undertake to regulate the slaughter by imposing a nonexport law and by making it illegal to take deer under "unsportsmanlike" conditions. Specifically, Roney suggested that it be made illegal to have in possession deerskins in the red or spotted coat. The practice of "shining," which meant hunting deer at night with the use of a lantern, should also be prohibited; and deer should not be killed while in the water, he urged. These two practices were used principally by market hunters. Greatest stress, of course, was placed upon the need for an act which would declare that protected game could not be killed except for use as food within the state.²⁴

Roney's report, reprints of which were made available to all interested persons,²⁵ undoubtedly had much to do with the passage of the nonexport law in 1881. The meeting of the association that

²³*Fourth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 63-64.

²⁴*Fourth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 64-65.

²⁵*Fourth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 68.

year was held in the "Legislative halls"²⁶ of Lansing, where political pressure could easily be exerted. Moreover, constitutional scruples which had upset previous efforts were lacking at this time.²⁷

The act as passed provided that "no person . . . shall . . . kill, or expose for sale, transport . . . deer, ruffed grouse, colin or quail, pinnated grouse, or wild turkey . . . for any purpose except for consumption as food within this state." Violations were punishable by \$50 fine or thirty-day imprisonment. Other recommendations made by the sportsmen were also embodied into law at the same session. Possession of deer in the red or spotted coat became illegal, and the killing of deer in waters, "streams, ponds, or lakes" was prohibited. Neither could deer be taken by means of pitfalls or traps.²⁸

Pleased with their success in obtaining these game conservation measures, the members of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association assembled the following year in East Saginaw to consider the effectiveness of the act. They agreed that the nonexport prohibition was a landmark in the state's conservation history. They listened with interest when William B. Mershon read an encouraging letter from the secretary of the Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, game protection club. According to the Wisconsin man, the nonexport law was effective in restraining market hunting in the Upper Peninsula and "was the means of saving more deer than all other statutes combined." Mershon himself believed that the nonexport provision "did more toward the protection of game than any other measure that had ever been taken in that direction."²⁹

However, the sportsmen realized that, to be effective, conservation laws had to be adequately enforced and that this was particularly true of the 1881 act. It was not presumed, even by the most

²⁶*Fourth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, Preface.

²⁷However, it was not until 1895 that the United States Supreme Court declared a similar Connecticut statute constitutional in *Greer v. Conn.*, 161 US 595.

²⁸*Public Acts and Joint and Concurrent Resolutions of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1881*, 144-45, 340-43 (Lansing, 1881). Michigan became the first state to prohibit killing of deer while in the water. It was not until 1887 that the use of artificial light in hunting deer was prohibited, but Michigan again led the way. See Theodore S. Palmer, "Chronology and Index of the More Important Events in American Game Protection, 1776-1911," in the United States Department of Agriculture, *Biological Survey Bulletin* No. 41, 32 (Washington, 1912).

²⁹*Fifth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 24-25, 65 (East Saginaw, 1882).

optimistic individual, that the hordes of market hunters would voluntarily give up their lucrative occupation. Roney reminded the association that venison was frequently exported in boxes marked "merchandise" and that specific violations of the new law at such shipment centers as Ludington, Port Huron, and Detroit had been reported to him.³⁰

Discussion of various means for improving the enforcement of game legislation had concerned the members of the association ever since 1879, and they now turned their energies with renewed vigor toward this problem. It has already been noted that sportsmen believed local enforcement was unsatisfactory. Officials were seldom interested in the principles of wildlife conservation, and the difficulty of apprehending individuals in the act of violating game laws made the task time-consuming. Moreover the frequent hostility toward strict enforcement of such legislation jeopardized the social and political standing of local officers who attempted it. Consequently, however progressive wildlife conservation policy might be, it would be of little avail until general observance and support of game laws could be obtained.

At their meeting in Lansing late in January, 1879, the sportsmen had been asked by their committee on the enforcement of game and fish laws to express opinions on the advisability of calling for the establishment of a "state constabulary." The only concrete proposal at that time was that the Board of Fish Commissioners³¹ might be given the extra duty of enforcing game and fish laws. It was suggested that the board be empowered to employ a number of deputies to aid in performing this work.³²

The following year at Bay City a special group to be known as the Missionary Committee was appointed. The occasion for its appointment was the expression by some members of a feeling that the objective of their agitation for enforcing the laws had been misunderstood by those residents of the northern part of the state

³⁰*Fifth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 65.

³¹Created in 1873, the board's primary function was to engage in artificial propagation of whitefish for the Great Lakes. See *General Acts and Joint and Concurrent Resolutions of the Legislature of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1873*, 171-72 (Lansing, 1873).

³²*Transactions of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association for the Protection of Fish, Game and Birds*, 20 (East Saginaw, 1879).

who relied upon wildlife for sustenance. It was believed that if there were "a better understanding on the part of the actual settlers of the *spirit of humanity and generosity which activates the Association's efforts to perpetuate the natural and bountiful food supply of game*, there would be perfect harmony and cooperation between them."³³ Actually very little was accomplished along these lines. However, in cooperation with the committee on enforcement, a concrete proposal was prepared for presentation to the 1881 gathering of the association at Lansing.

At that time Cyrus W. Higby admonished the sportsmen not to lose sight of one of their principal aims—the protection of the state's wildlife. The Jackson sportsman believed "there [could] . . . be no better method than the enforcement of the law." He then obtained the support of the association for the following resolution:

Resolved, that a committee of three be appointed by the president to confer with Gov. Jerome as to the importance and advisability of the appointment of a state game warden, thereby creating an independent office, with salary sufficient to make it effective, said game warden to have power to appoint one or more deputies in every county in the state, and to remove the same for disability or incompetency. . . .³⁴

It is not known whether Governor David H. Jerome was convinced by the special committee that a state game warden was necessary, but the legislature of 1881 refused to pass the required act.

Perhaps some of the sportsmen lacked confidence that this desired goal could be obtained. At any rate, during the summer of 1881 at least one club sought to enforce the law itself. This group, the East Saginaw Protection Club, soon learned, however, how difficult a task this could be. The president of the club was Augustus H. Mershon, father of William B. Mershon, secretary of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association. The former was in Harrison, Clare County, the morning of June 10, 1881, when he saw two men with a freshly killed deer. In their wagon they also had a boat, gun, and reflecting lantern, which indicated to Mershon not only that the deer had been killed out of season, but that the hunters had used the unsportsman-like practice of shining. The deer was taken to the rear of a saloon owned by John Hatfield. There it was dressed and the venison was

³³Third Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association, 42.

³⁴Fourth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association, 35-36.

distributed among certain local establishments. Mershon was able to obtain several witnesses who could testify to these facts.

The case seemed strong, and the East Saginaw Protection Club decided to prosecute. A trial was held at Clare. The sportsmen encountered difficulties in presenting their case, for some witnesses refused to testify, and the county prosecutor did not cooperate. Nevertheless the facts of the case were established in court. When the jury, after a short deliberation, rendered a verdict of not guilty, the amazed plaintiffs asked for an accounting. They were told, "It might have been a *tame* deer—didn't prove it was wild."³⁵

The elder Mershon was completely disillusioned by this experience. "I am satisfied," he said, "that no jury can be impaneled in the ordinary way, by the officers now in charge, that will convict any of the violators of the Game Law, no matter how direct the evidence and positive the testimony." Moreover, he believed violations were so widespread that few local residents would take it upon themselves to initiate prosecutions. In forwarding to the Michigan Sportsmen's Association his father's report of this incident, William B. Mershon added the comment: "Please remember, gentlemen, these violations are not made by the settler and the homesteader, but by a lawless set of idle, whiskey-drinking bums."³⁶

Members of the association, as guests of the East Saginaw Protection Club in 1882, again considered the problem of enforcement and listened to a plan proposed by their president, Ezra S. Holmes. Although the Grand Rapids man believed an independent officer should be appointed by the governor upon the nomination of the association, it was felt there was little possibility of attaining that end. Holmes, therefore, advocated the hiring of a "missionary" by the group to concentrate not directly upon enforcement as such, but upon the attainment of an enlightened public opinion. The duties of the

³⁵Report to the Michigan Sportsmen's Association, East Saginaw, July 24, 1881, in the William B. Mershon manuscripts in the Michigan Historical Collections at the University of Michigan.

³⁶Report to the Michigan Sportsmen's Association, East Saginaw, July 24, 1881, in the Mershon manuscripts. Augustus H. Mershon bitterly reported questioning a group of men as to "the quality of [venison] . . . in early, hot summer weather," and related that, "one in the party, a Mr. Peters, said he could 'stomach a doe now.' I looked him over and I thought he could. He was out of season himself, being in the red coat, vest and pants—gaudily but not neatly dressed in red from his nose to his feet apparently all in one garment. He weighs over two or three hundred, principally stomach."

missionary would be to organize new game protection clubs in those parts of the state where none existed and to "wake up the old ones—not so much for the enforcement of the game laws, as to the importance of obedience to them because they are good." He would also attempt to obtain the cooperation of all concerned, particularly of farmers, marketmen, and railroads. Holmes' proposal was favorably considered by the Missionary Committee, which recommended the appointment of a "state association protective agent." After a short discussion by the members, in which the expense involved in the plan constituted the only serious objection, the resolution was adopted.³⁷

In conformity with its provisions, Cyrus W. Higby was appointed at an executive meeting held on March 8, 1882, at Grand Rapids.³⁸ His salary was to be \$3.00 per day for time actually spent, plus expenses.

Higby took his job seriously, and from June 1 to November 1, 1882, he traveled about the state and organized twenty local protection clubs, including one in Harrison, the center of hostility to the sportsmen. He assembled in a public meeting all those who were interested in game law enforcement and appointed deputy wardens who were to see that the laws were enforced.³⁹

Despite his success, Higby was convinced that a state official was needed. He reaffirmed Holmes' suggestion of the previous year that a game warden should be appointed by the governor upon the recommendation of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association. "This," he said, "will insure a thoroughly qualified incumbent of the office, vouched for by an association whose ability to choose and sincerity of purpose are above question."⁴⁰

A bill which would provide for a state game and fish warden was prepared by the association and presented to the legislators in 1883⁴¹

³⁷*Fifth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 44, 64.

³⁸William B. Mershon, Ezra S. Holmes, and Higby were the members present at this meeting. *Fifth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 78.

³⁹*Sixth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 41-44.

⁴⁰*Sixth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 34.

⁴¹Its defeat in 1883 was bitterly reported by William B. Mershon, who wrote to the editor of *Forest and Stream* that all members interested should come to the meeting in Jackson and "bring along your member of the legislature and let [him] . . . hear what a fine thing [he] . . . did by defeating our 'Game Warden Bill.'" *Forest and Stream*, 21:456 (January 3, 1884).

and again at each succeeding session until its passage was achieved. New and interesting arguments to support the proposal were outlined at annual meetings of the association at Jackson in 1884 and at Lansing in 1885. Holmes, for example, pointed out that the association's private warden had done valuable work but that it was not right to require the sportsmen to finance his efforts because "this work has not been done in the interest of individuals, of any association, but for the good of the commonwealth." He further asserted that good enforcement of the game and fish laws would eliminate private preserves. These grounds, he said, were restricted to the wealthy who could afford them and soon the majority would "have nothing left [to shoot] but glass balls and clay pigeons. . . ."⁴²

In 1885 Holmes urged that the proposed warden should be independent of political interests and that "his great work should be of a missionary character," rather than simply a police function. He would thereby be following the practice of a "judicious stock-grower" and conserving those species of public property so there would be a regular increase of the original supply.⁴³

Finally in 1887 the game warden bill was enacted into law.⁴⁴ The measure was welcomed by the sportsmen although it varied in some particulars from the desires of the association. The salary of the game warden was to be \$1,200 per year, plus expenses, as recommended.⁴⁵ However, whereas the sportsmen had suggested that the warden be under the control of the Board of Fish Commissioners, which would be given power to remove him at its discretion, the act provided that he be appointed for a four-year term and be responsible only to the governor. There was no provision that the governor should consult with the association in making the appointment. The state warden was to have authority to appoint county wardens to help him in enforcement. Notably lacking was any indication that the office should be "missionary" in nature. A concurrent resolution passed at the same session, however, directed

⁴²*Seventh Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 18-19 (East Saginaw, 1884).

⁴³*Seventh Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 86.

⁴⁴*Public Acts and Joint and Concurrent Resolutions of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1887*, 27-28 (Lansing, 1887). The vote in the House was 343 to 4; in the Senate, 62 to 6.

⁴⁵*Eighth Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association*, 82-84. (East Saginaw, 1885).

the warden to publish in pamphlet form all the state laws pertaining to game and fish.⁴⁶

With the passage of the bill, Michigan became the first state to provide for a paid state game warden.⁴⁷ Governor Cyrus Luce appointed William Alden Smith to the office—an appointment which met with general approval by the sportsmen, although some doubted whether he could tell a "ruffed grouse from a blue jay."⁴⁸ A tabulation made in 1894 of arrests for violation of the conservation laws indicated that, whereas only twenty-two convictions had been obtained in 1886, Warden Smith made 220 in 1887, the first year of the new system.⁴⁹

By that time the Michigan Sportsmen's Association was no longer in existence.⁵⁰ While no far-sighted sportsman would claim that the fight for adequate conservation had been completely won, undoubtedly there were many ready to let the state take the lead in formulating subsequent policy. The Michigan Game and Fish Protective League flourished briefly in the late 1890's and enjoyed some measure of success, but its deliberations were characterized by haggling over whether to allow spring shooting of migratory waterfowl, and these internal disagreements weakened its influence. The Michigan Association for the Protection of Game and Fish, organized shortly after 1900 and dominated for many years by William B. Mershon, fought hard to have the office of warden removed from political influences. However, like the league, its effectiveness was limited. Neither of these sportsmen's groups enjoyed such success as had the Michigan Sportsmen's Association.

While recognition of the early association's pioneering efforts in the field of wildlife conservation was not widespread among the people upon whom the failure or success of conservation depended, some encouragement was received from contemporary sources. The

⁴⁶*Public Acts and Joint and Concurrent Resolutions of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1887*, 484.

⁴⁷Palmer, "Chronology . . . of . . . Events in American Game Protection," in the United States Department of Agriculture, *Biological Survey Bulletin* No. 41, 33.

⁴⁸*Forest and Stream*, 28:201 (March 31, 1887).

⁴⁹Michigan, *Third Biennial Report of the State Game and Fish Warden*, 1892, Appendix, 2 (Lansing, 1893).

⁵⁰There is no printed copy of their proceedings after the 1885 session at Lansing, but it is fair to presume that at least some of the members were present in that city in 1887 when the warden bill was being considered.

president of the Wisconsin Sportsmen's Association, for example, wrote in 1880 that his group was endeavoring to follow in the footsteps of the Michigan organization.⁵¹ The *Chicago Field*, one of the leading sportsmen's journals and one which exerted considerable influence upon conservation policies in the Midwest, stated that the Michigan Sportsmen's Association was one of only three such organizations in the country that were sincerely interested in wildlife conservation rather than in "the slaughter of the pigeons. . . ."⁵²

This recognition naturally came from those agencies which, like the association, were struggling for sound conservation laws. It was to be expected that their pioneering efforts would elicit more indifference than support from the general public. The people of today, however, owe a debt of gratitude to these early sportsmen, particularly for their contributions toward the establishment of the office of game warden in 1887, which marked the beginning of modern conservation policy for Michigan. The nonexport law of 1881 was a notable innovation and one necessary to conservation of wildlife, but with the adoption of the game wardenship, the state first recognized the broader role it had to play in conservation.

In successive years the activities of the game warden were to be extended to embrace not only enforcement, but such things as game propagation, forest fire control, reforestation, and public education in all phases of conservation. With the creation of the department of conservation in 1921, the various state agencies concerned with the preservation and use of all natural resources were consolidated. This recognition of the interdependence of the various resources, together with the concept of the best utilization of all assets, characterizes modern conservation thinking. The department today attempts to make certain that wildlife will be used for the benefit not only of sportsmen, but of all people. Yet, without the work of the early sportsmen who believed in preserving game and fish for posterity, the advantages now enjoyed by Michigan's citizens and visitors would not be possible.

⁵¹Third Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association, 30.

⁵²Quoted in Third Annual Book of the Michigan Sportsmen's Association, 35. The other two organizations mentioned were the Cuvier Club of Cincinnati and the New Hampshire Association.

The Macomb House: Presidential Mansion

Agnes Miller

AT NUMBER 39 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, amid a financial district considered quite unsentimental, rises the nearly topless tower of a skyscraper housing a myriad of firms presumably unemotional. It is strange that a representative of one of these firms should almost lyrically confide to the writer: "We of the Company have often talked of the fact of Washington's home having been situated here," when the story of the Macomb house, once the second presidential mansion, which was built in 1786-87 by Alexander Macomb of Detroit, has been so little told by historians as to be news today to many who are usually well informed. Yet this builder erected a house unique in national as well as local annals, which could owe its existence only to the vision and enterprise of a bold pioneer.

On February 23, 1790, President George Washington moved from his first abode in the capital of the United States, New York, to a new dwelling. There was a social note about it in the local press: "The President of the United States, now resides in Broad-Way, in the house, that was lately improved by the *Hon. Chargé d'Affaires* of his Most Christian Majesty."¹ This was Alexander Macomb's house, which Washington occupied for six months, during the Second Session of the First Congress. Its story is found not only in scattered city records, but in such sources as an old London literary magazine, an eighteenth century French painting, and a letter from a guest who went to a ball in the house. These offer clues to unify a fragmentary history with a sparkling course of incident from the purchase of the very lot where the house stood until its disappearance in the mid-nineteenth century.

For 159 years, in a city of incessant change, this lot has borne the number "39." The listing "M'comb, Alexander, merchant," first received that number on Broadway in *The New York Directory and Register for the Year 1794*.² Macomb's name, however, appears in earlier directories. A few facts, some of them familiar, may serve as a

¹*Gazette of the United States* (New York, February 27, 1790.

²New York, 1794.

background in the narrative of the house frequently pronounced the finest of 4,100 homes in the post-Revolutionary city.

Alexander Macomb (1748-1831) was born in Belfast, Ireland, July 27, 1748, and came to this country from Dunturkey, county Antrim, with his parents when he was seven years old. Having first settled in Albany, New York, the family removed to Detroit in 1769, where the father, John Gordon Macomb, became a dealer in British army supplies.³

Alexander and his brother, William, followed the same business and also traded in furs. In 1776 the two brothers bought Grosse Isle at the mouth of the Detroit River from the Potawatomi Indians. Five years later they bought the farm immediately below Fort Pontchartrain, then known as the St. Martin farm and later as the Lewis Cass farm.

Alexander Macomb had become intimately acquainted and allied with some of the older and more permanent French families in Detroit and vicinity. On May 4, 1773, he had married Catherine Navarre, daughter of Robert Navarre, superintendant and royal notary of the French colony at Detroit from 1730. This allied Alexander Macomb with the family of Jacques St. Martin who had married Mary Ann, another daughter of Robert Navarre, in 1760. It was from the heirs of Jacques and Mary St. Martin that the Macomb brothers had purchased the St. Martin farm.

On April 3, 1782, a son, Alexander, was born to Alexander and Catherine Macomb in the old St. Martin house. This son entered the United States army in 1798. He was the commander at the battle of Plattsburg at Lake Champlain in 1814. He was commander of the military district of Detroit from 1815 to 1821, and in 1835 became commander in chief of the United States army. Major-General Alexander Macomb, Jr., died at Washington, D. C., on June 25, 1841. A Michigan county was named for him by his friend, Governor Lewis Cass, in 1818.

In 1785 the elder Alexander Macomb moved to New York. With him came his wife and their eight children. They were followed in

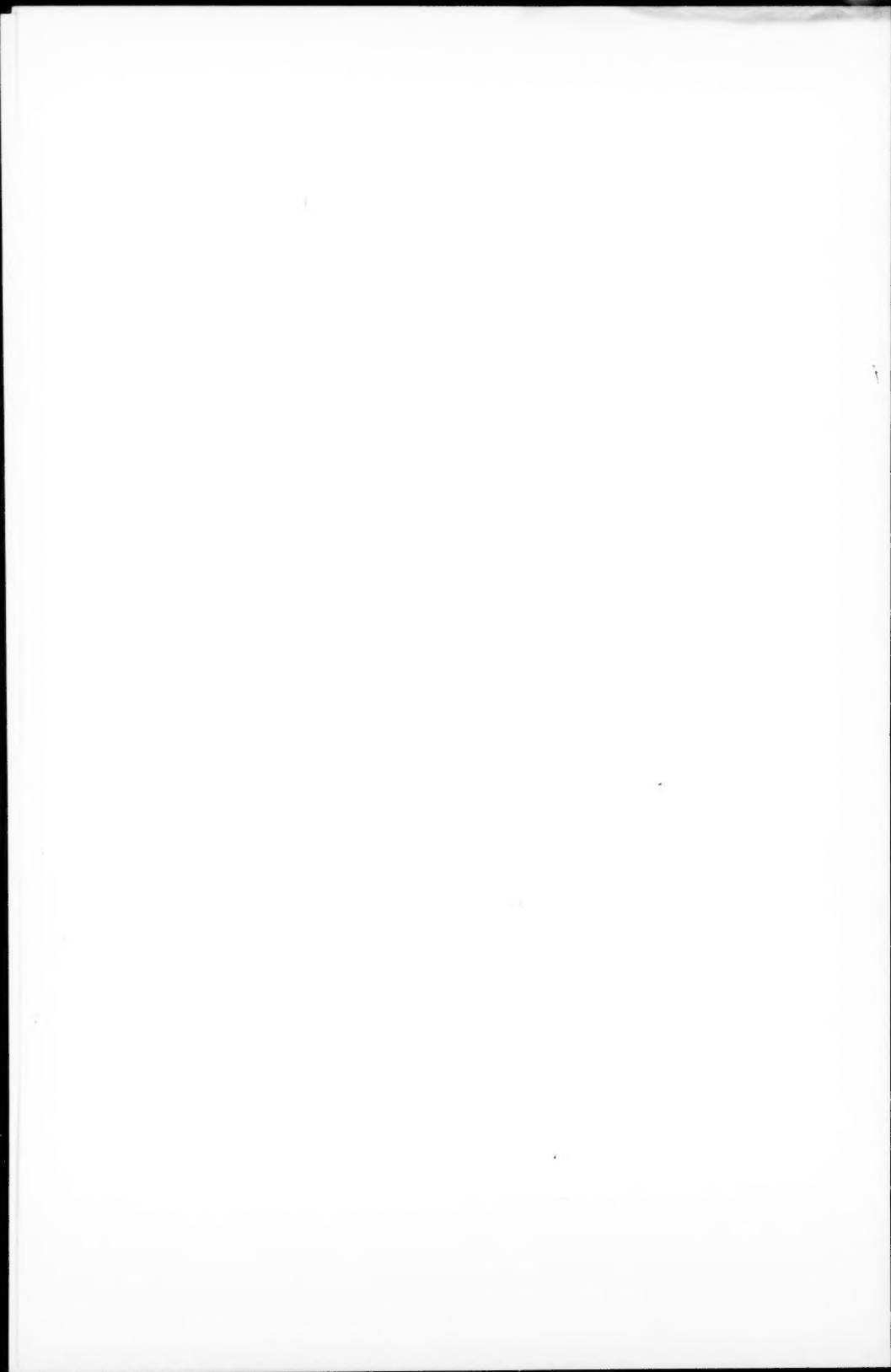
³Henry Alexander Macomb, *The Macomb Family Record*, 7 (Camden, 1917). The portrait reproduced with this article is a crayon drawing by Charles Balthazar Julien Févret de St. Mémin which appears as an illustration in Clarence Winthrop Bowen, *The History of the Centennial Celebration of George Washington*, facing page 51 (New York, 1892).



CATHERINE NAVARRE MACOMB
(1757-1789)



Courtesy New York Public Library
ALEXANDER MACOMB
(1748-1831)



1786 by Detroit friends and relatives. These were George Christian Anthon and his wife. Anthon had become the second husband of Mary Ann Navarre in 1770. Her first husband had been Jacques St. Martin. They had three children. Anthon had reared these children and had married a niece, Genevieve Jadot. At least three of the Anthon children became prominent in New York. John, born in Detroit in 1784, was the founder of the Supreme Court in New York City and an eminent New York jurist. Henry was for twenty-five years (1836-1861) rector of St. Mark's in the Bowery. Charles was a member of the faculty of Columbia University for forty-four years (1820-1864) and a celebrated classical scholar.⁴

After his removal to New York, Alexander Macomb was to become a ship owner and landed proprietor, purchasing in 1791 an area of 6,600 square miles in New York state alone;⁵ but especially imaginative among his many bold enterprises was the building of his Broadway house. Early city conveyances show that he bought a vacant lot which included the present numbers 39 and 41 on May 8, 1786.⁶ These numbers adjoin, since on Broadway odd numbers run north along the west side of the street, even numbers along the east. The Macomb house was to be built to occupy this tract and to be known by the number 39.

For ten years this area had been "the burnt district," having been devastated by the Great Fire of September 21, 1776, a major disaster which destroyed 493 buildings. Even in July, 1790, when Colonel John Trumbull painted for the City Corporation his celebrated portrait of Washington which was posed before the Macomb house, showing Washington in uniform standing beside his white horse, the artist wrote: "I represented . . . in the background, a view of Broadway, in ruins, as it then was . . . Every part of the detail of the dress, horse, furniture, etc., as well as the scenery, was accurately copied

⁴Milo M. Quaife, "The Mansion of St. Martin," in the *Burton Historical Collection Leaflet*, 3:33-45 (January, 1925); Julia Hyde Keith, "History of Grosse Ile," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 35:583-87 (Lansing, 1907); William L. Jenks, "History and Meaning of the County Names of Michigan," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 38:446-48 (Lansing, 1912).

⁵He also owned large tracts in North Carolina, Kentucky, and Georgia.

⁶Conveyances in *Liber Deeds*, xlvi:6, the official New York City book of ancient conveyances, for which see Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, volume 1, part 2:422 (New York, 1927).

from the real objects."⁷ Alexander Macomb's home, beside which stood at numbers 43 and 45 two other beautiful residences which he also erected, was the first to rise in the burnt district.

Several early nineteenth century prints show the harmonious proportions of the group, clearly portrayed in the accompanying illustration. It actually shows three houses, of which number 39 was the largest; but the street front is constructed so as to appear like that of four narrow houses. Number 39 includes the first two sections at the left. A slightly projecting cornice crowns the group; three parallel mouldings across the front indicate graduated heights of stories. The ground floor is a step or two above street level. The Macomb house was fifty-six feet wide; the other two houses were each twenty-five feet in width.⁸ Macomb's was the first one finished, having been completed August 10, 1787, according to city records.⁹ A glimpse at the interiors while under erection is afforded by the account of Colonel John May of Boston (1748-1812), a traveler for the Ohio country, when on May 22, 1788, he was passing through New York:

Went to see a pile of new buildings, nearly completed, belonging to a Mr. McComb. By far the finest buildings my eyes ever beheld, and I believe they excel any on the continent. In one of the entries I traveled up five flights of stairs—the rail continuous from bottom to top.¹⁰

Finely planned and finished interior work, as well as handsome exteriors, would have been of special interest to Colonel May, who was to build the first house on the site of Marietta, Ohio.

"Spaciousness and contiguity to Federal Hall in Wall Street" where Congress was meeting counted personally as well as officially in the choosing of the Macomb house as the President's residence.¹¹ It will be recalled that for ten months following his inauguration on April 30, 1789, Washington lived in the Franklin house at number 3 Cherry Street. This proved to be cramped quarters for an official

⁷John Trumbull, *Autobiography of John Trumbull*, 164 (New York, 1841). This portrait hangs in the New York City Hall.

⁸Illustration from *Bourne Views. The Bourne Series of New York*, plate 5 (New York, 1831). See Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, volume 2, part 1:422.

⁹*Manhattan Common Council Proceedings* (1784-1831), 4:4. See Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, volume 2, part 1:422.

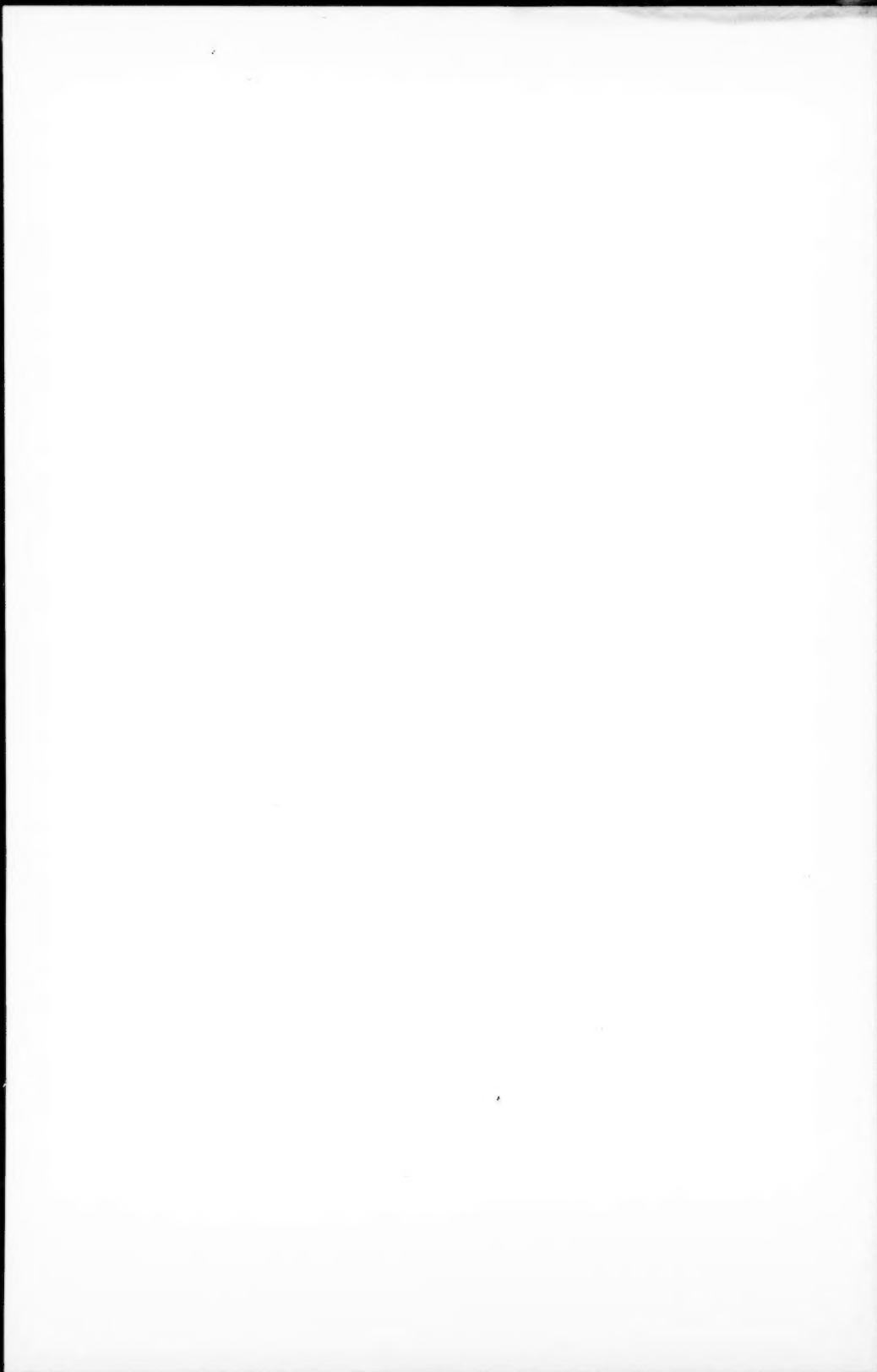
¹⁰*Journal and Letters of Colonel John May for 1788*, 21 (Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio Publications, new series 1) (Cincinnati, 1873).

¹¹Westervelt manuscript number 9 in the New York Public Library.



THE MANSION HOUSE AS IT WAS IN 1831

Courtesy New York Public Library



family of nine: the Washingtons, two Custis grandchildren, four secretaries, and a military aide. Indeed, Washington's diary for February 22, 1790, gives a hint of the position: "Set seriously about removing my furniture to my new home. Two gentlemen of the family had their beds taken there, and would sleep there tonight."¹²

The two gentlemen who thus anticipated moving day to the new home, which came to be suitably called the "Mansion House," were Robert Lewis and Thomas Nelson. It is recorded that these two secretaries, with a third, David Humphreys, had had to be crowded into one room in Cherry Street; a situation not improved by Colonel Humphreys' distinguished success as a poet with a five-act tragedy about to see production in Philadelphia.¹³ Naturally elated, he was wont to pace the floor through the small hours, reciting good bits of the masterpiece and urging his two roommates to comment favorably.¹⁴ So Washington doubtless averted some crises when he "visited the apartments in the house of Mr. McComb's" designed for a large household, and "made a disposition of the rooms"¹⁵ before moving in as third lessee.

That the house was so soon leased was probably because at this time Macomb wanted funds for his financial enterprises; there was a housing shortage, he rented his three dwellings. Washington paid at the rate of \$2,500 a year, which was considered high.¹⁶ Prior to the inauguration, the minister of France to the United States, Count Eléonor-François-Elie de Moustier, had occupied Macomb's house, and following the Count's recall in October, 1789, Louis Guillaume Otto, the French chargé mentioned previously, lived there until Washington came. Washington, like Otto, made some improvements, one recorded in his diary for February 6, 1790, being the building of a stable thirty feet square with twelve stalls, at a cost of £65 or about \$160.¹⁷

¹²John F. Fitzpatrick, *The Diaries of George Washington 1748-1799*, 4:92 (Boston and New York, 1924).

¹³The play was "The Widow of Malabar" of Antoine-Marin Lemierre and was produced May 2, 1790, at the Southwark Theatre, Philadelphia, by Lewis Hallam and Thomas Wignell. See Benson J. Lossing, *Mount Vernon and Its Associations*, 123 (New York, 1859).

¹⁴George Washington Parke Custis, *Recollections and Private Memoirs of Washington*, 399 (Philadelphia, 1861).

¹⁵Fitzpatrick, *The Diaries of George Washington 1748-1799*, 4:84.

¹⁶Rufus Wilmot Griswold, *The Republican Court*, 168 (New York, 1855).

¹⁷Fitzpatrick, *The Diaries of George Washington 1748-1799*, 4:85.

Although expensive, the house had unusual amenities for the rather primitive city of its day. Behind it was a garden which ran down to the bank of the Hudson River, and on the river was the Macomb wharf.¹⁸ The house was close by the Bowling Green, the center of popular sports. The city soon made improvements in the street, repaving the west side of Broadway in 1786-1787 "from the Lutheran Church past Mr. McComb's door,"¹⁹ a distance of several blocks. In short the conveniences of the Mansion House were many, and show excellent foresight and planning.

In this connection appears a direct tribute to Alexander Macomb's success as a builder. On September 30, 1788, he was appointed by the Common Council as a commissioner—one of five—to superintend alterations on the City Hall.²⁰ Extensive remodeling was under way to prepare the building as Federal Hall, meeting place of the First Congress. The architect in charge of remodeling was Major Pierre-Charles L'Enfant (1754-1825), who designed the city of Washington, D. C. With him and his associates Macomb worked to enlarge the hall with chambers for the Senate and the House, also two galleries. The whole building was fitted up and decorated with exceptional elegance.²¹ The facilities and beauties of the Mansion House thus had attracted public recognition.

One facility rather too convenient from the modern point of view was the President's office, the room to the right of the front door, entering from Broadway. This alarmingly accessible location greatly pleased Washington. Indeed, he wrote nostalgically when the capital moved to Philadelphia: "The residence will not be so commodious as that I left in New York, for there . . . my office was in the front room below, where persons on business immediately entered."²² It is true that the volume of business before the Second Session of the First Congress was so vast and important that any means of forwarding it might have been welcomed. Number 39 was but four blocks from the meeting place of Congress at Wall and Nassau Streets. A fair

¹⁸Lossing, *Mount Vernon*, 213; *Gazette of the United States*, September 1, 1790.

¹⁹Thomas E. V. Smith, *The City of New York in the Year of Washington's Inauguration*, 18 (New York, 1889).

²⁰Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, volume 5, part 1:1232.

²¹*Historic New York*, edited by Maude Wilder Goodwin, 111-12 (New York, 1897).

²²Benson J. Lossing, *Life of Washington*, 3:169 (New York, 1860).

sampling of the legislation that passed over the President's desk might include the bills which established or regulated naturalization, patents, the post office, the payment of the debts of the United States, choice of a permanent capital; or which dealt with the problems of relieving American captives of piratical dictators in Algiers. Perhaps the best news of the session was the ratification on May 29, 1790, of the Constitution by Rhode Island by a vote of 34 to 32, last of the thirteen states to ratify.

Across the hall, to the left of the front door, were drawing rooms. There is a description of them in *The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal of London*, for 1826.²³ The title of the article is "Washington"; the authorship is credited to the celebrated essayist, William Hazlitt (1778-1832), who was frequently a contributor to this periodical. The story is of an Englishman calling on the President, the time being placed, through context, in the summer of 1790.²⁴ Following a vivid pen portrait of Washington, "he was remarkably dignified in manner . . . his dress was of purple satin . . . his smile was extraordinarily attractive . . . it struck me no man could be better formed for command . . .," appears perhaps the liveliest sketch of the Mansion House in print:

The house of Washington was in the Broadway, and the street front was handsome. The drawing-room in which I sat, was lofty and spacious; but the furniture was not beyond that found in dwellings of opulent Americans in general, and might be called plain for its situation. The upper end of the room had glass doors, which opened upon a balcony commending an extensive view of the Hudson River, interspersed with islands, and the Jersey shore on the opposite side.²⁵

The narrator is called "my father," a slight fictionizing of the

²³*The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal*, volume 19, part 1:562-63 (London, 1826). This magazine is bound consecutively without monthly covers; the article, "Washington," is unsigned, but appears under "Anecdotal Recollections, No. III," for which title see general index at end of volume.

²⁴There is an allusion to the severe illness Washington suffered in the late spring of 1790.

²⁵"Washington," in *The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal*, volume 19, part 1:563. Washington bought some of his furniture used in the Macomb house from Count de Moustier. This included the tambour secretary and circular chair taken to Mount Vernon. See Lossing, *Mount Vernon*, 215. Washington considered the furniture he bought "well adapted to particular public rooms." Two rooms he had had "hung with scenic wallpaper, which was then colored." See Stephen Decatur, Jr., *The Private Affairs of George Washington*, 123 (Boston, 1933).

situation; actually the essayist's father, the Rev. William Hazlitt (1737-1820), could not have made this call, but he had seen Washington and was in a position to have supplied facts for the article. This Unitarian minister, sympathetic with the aims of the American Revolution, lived in the United States from 1783 to 1786, returning permanently to England with his family in the latter year. In 1783, however, the Hazlitts were living in Philadelphia, where Washington came during the week of December 8 to receive public honors. There the Rev. Mr. Hazlitt saw the General at a weekday meeting at St. Peter's Church. Furthermore, it was in 1790 that the Rev. Mr. Hazlitt brought out in London his *Discourses for the Use of Families*, a book for which he had notable American subscription agents and many American subscribers.²⁶ These dates and contacts suggest authentic sources for the *New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal* story. Its description of the house has occasionally been quoted, and the article received at least one contemporary reprint.²⁷

Also authentic is a painting which preserves the extensive view from the glass-doored balcony, today much changed by modern construction. The gifted artist of this charming water color in blues and greens was the Marquise de Bréhan, sister-in-law of Count de Moustier, who, together with her son, accompanied him to America.²⁸ Painted in 1789 from an upper floor of the Macomb house, the picture shows the Hudson with a French frigate and some small sailing ships, the Jersey shore and Paulus Hook, which is now Jersey City.²⁹

The drawing room described was one of several public rooms in the Mansion House. At "a most splendid ball" given May 14, 1789, by Count de Moustier for President Washington, "three rooms were

²⁶W. Carew Hazlitt, *Four Generations of a Literary Family*, 1:23, 126 (London and New York, 1927).

²⁷In the *Boston Patriot*, July 24, 1827.

²⁸*Trois Amitiés Françaises de Jefferson*, edited by Gilbert Chinard, 16, 26 (Paris, 1927), quotes letters from Thomas Jefferson to James Madison: "The husband of Mme. de Bréhan is an officer and obliged by the times to remain with the army"; and from John Jay to Jefferson on American public criticism of the French Minister's household. De Moustier and Mme. de Bréhan, both of whom were considered eccentric, visited Washington at Mount Vernon, and she painted an excellent portrait of him.

²⁹*Vue de Paulus Hook prise de l'Appartement de M^{lle} La Mquise de Bréhan à New York*, in the New York Public Library.

filled," and a fourth, "set off as a place for refreshments," had "a long table across it in the middle, from wall to wall."³⁰ The splendor of the entertainments by the French minister was shown in the illumination of the whole front of the Macomb mansion on the evening of Inauguration Day, April 30, 1789, with borderings of lights in the doors and windows which shone on symbolical historic transparencies and paintings.³¹ Although Washington's taste was less elaborate, some of the social events staged in the Mansion House during his occupancy were equally spectacular in their own way. One was the dinner he tendered to five Indian chiefs, which turned out to be a red-letter day in American art annals. The chiefs were the principal warriors of a delegation of thirty Creek Indians, who were in New York to conclude a peace treaty with the United States, which was signed August 13, 1790.³² Washington considered this treaty as the foundation of peace and prosperity in the southwest frontier. It allowed the Creeks to trade through the United States, whereas previously their trade had had to operate through the territories of Spain, where a British company was in control. Magnificent in his full uniform, Washington received the chiefs invited to the dinner. Colonel John Trumbull was also a guest. He was vastly impressed by the splendid dignity of the savages, and records that he "succeeded in obtaining drawings of several by stealth." Some of the sketches remain to us.³³ Completed, but still in the Mansion House before its delivery to the City Corporation, also was Trumbull's recently painted portrait of Washington. The artist's chronicle continues:

The President was curious to see the effect it would produce on their untutored minds. He therefore directed me to place the picture in an advantageous light, facing the door of entrance to the room where it was, and having invited several of the principal chiefs to dine, he after dinner proposed to them a walk. . . . When the door was thrown open, they started at seeing another "Great Father" in the room. . . . They were for a time mute with astonishment.³⁴

³⁰Griswold, *The Republican Court*, 157-58; *Gazette of the United States*, May 16, 1789.

³¹*Gazette of the United States*, April 29, 1790.

³²*Gazette of the United States*, August 14, 1790.

³³Theodore Sizer, *The Works of Colonel John Trumbull*, 32, 34, 35, 52; illustration 18, no paging (New Haven, 1950).

³⁴Trumbull, *Autobiography*, 185. Washington records having posed eight times at the Macomb house for Trumbull's "historical pieces."

Finally venturing to touch the portrait, they were further baffled to find it flat, cold, and without thickness. An enlightening dinner party, on both sides.

Quite other than a routine occasion, also, was the President's official reception on August 4, 1790. It was the Marquis de Lafayette who indirectly changed a weekly event into a memorable date. On that day the key of the Bastille, which had been razed July 14, 1789, was first exhibited in this country, and in the Macomb house.³⁵ The key is now in Mount Vernon. In making a personal gift of it to Washington, Lafayette had handed it to Thomas Paine for transmission. Paine gave the key to John Rutledge of South Carolina, a justice of the Supreme Court, who arrived with it aboard the *Chesterfield* packet on August 2. He placed it in Washington's hands, and two days later the key created great enthusiasm at the presidential reception.

There is direct evidence that Washington personally much appreciated all the charms and advantages of the Macomb mansion, for he so expressed himself on his departure from New York, first for Mount Vernon, and then for the capital in Philadelphia. At his final official dinner, August 28, 1790, which was tendered Governor George Clinton, Mayor Richard Varick, and the City Corporation, the President

having informed the gentlemen that he should leave the city on the Monday following . . . added that it was with the utmost regret that he should quit a residence which had been rendered so agreeable to him—Mrs. Washington appeared greatly affected.³⁶

Also agreeable is the fact that memories of Washington's occupancy remained with the Macomb house during its succeeding sixty-odd years of existence. Its historic name of Mansion House likewise was preserved, and the name of Alexander Macomb as its builder remains to this day on local records. Therefore a brief summary of its later history is pertinent.

Between 1789 and 1793 Macomb's personal affairs underwent some changes. Mrs. Catherine Navarre Macomb died on November 17, 1789. Two years later Alexander Macomb engaged in one of those vast speculations frequently recorded in our early history. This

³⁵*Gazette of the United States*, August 11, 1790.

³⁶*Gazette of the United States*, September 1, 1790.

involved a sale by New York state of wild and unappropriated lands in northern counties, at sensationally low prices. The terms called for payment in five annual installments without interest, subject to 6 per cent discount if paid in advance. To quote from the record:

In 1791 occurred the greatest sale ever made by the state, the Macomb Purchase, comprising nearly 4,000,000 acres at eightpence an acre, including all the portions of Franklin, Saint Lawrence, Jefferson, Lewis and Oswego Counties not heretofore disposed of, together with the adjoining islands in the Saint Lawrence River. Macomb became financially involved before completing this transaction.³⁷

Therefore on October 10, 1792, Alexander Macomb gave a deed in trust for his house, and on April 22, 1793, there were advertised for sale the "three elegant four-story houses" he had built at 39 to 45 Broadway.³⁸ On April 28, 1793, his own was sold for £5,700 (about \$14,250) to William Edgar, whose family held the property until 1849.³⁹

The later career of famous number 39 continued to preserve its early traditions. In 1821 it was opened, together with the two other dwellings, as a hotel that long enjoyed an excellent reputation. A fine picture of this hostelry, "Bunker's Mansion House," in full color, was published in 1848.⁴⁰ It shows the Macomb house still dominating the Broadway scene, shining white with brilliant green shutters across the banks of windows and a scarlet front door with spreading fanlight which recalls the great figures who crossed that threshold when Macomb had rented the house to Washington. The interior attractions of this well-known hotel were set forth as follows in an early guide-book:

The Mansion House, 39 Broadway, by Mr. W. J. Bunker, is a very large and commodious house, kept with the utmost neatness and attention, and usually filled with the best company; it possesses much of the

³⁷*History of the State of New York*, edited by Alexander C. Flick, volume 5:189 (New York, 1934); Martha J. Lamb, *History of the City of New York*, 382 (New York and Chicago, 1877).

³⁸In *The Diary; or, Loudon's Register*, April 22, 1793; Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, volume 1, part 2:422.

³⁹Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, volume 1, part 2:442. Macomb continued to live there until 1795. On July 11, 1791, he had married Mrs. Jane Marshall Rucker, widow of John Peter Rucker, a New York merchant. *New York Directory and Register* for the years 1791-95 (New York, 1791-1795); Macomb, *The Macomb Family Record*, 7.

⁴⁰Newman Jones and J. S. Ewbank, *The Illuminated Pictorial Directory of New York*, number 1:4 (New York, 1848).

retirement and quiet of an elegant private residence. The prices are \$2 per day or \$12 per week.⁴¹

Especially gratifying is the fact that this historic building, when its day was done, underwent no long period of deterioration. The neighborhood, with its numerous public buildings and accessibility to the harbor, remained fine when it became commercial in character. The city directory of 1851 records no house on the Number 39 site; this date is but three years after publication of the colored print just mentioned. The site was promptly built upon, for the Manhattan Common Council Proceedings of 1855 state that "the progress of business caused the above house to be destroyed and handsome brown freestone houses occupied by some of the heaviest dry goods merchants built there."

After surviving only in memory for more than eight decades, the historic dwelling returned to its site in 1939 in the form of a charming bronze bas-relief that today ornaments a plaque placed at the base of the number 39 tower. A title identifies the house as the Macomb Mansion; the inscription reads: "Site of Second Presidential Mansion occupied by General George Washington February 23 to August 30, 1790." This plaque was placed to mark the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the meeting of the First Congress. Thus a well-known Michigan name is linked in bronze with that of George Washington through their association with the Macomb Mansion, a unique landmark in the early American scene.

⁴¹Edmund M. Blunt, *Picture of New York*, 397 (New York, 1828). In section, "Principal Hotels."

Homestead Exemption in the Michigan Constitution of 1850

Lena London

IN JUNE, 1952, THE TERM "WIDOW'S HOMESTEAD" made the headlines when some farmers in Lapeer County prevented the sheriff from serving eviction papers on a widow and placed a sign in front of her house reading: "This is exempt property from seizure. This is a widow's homestead."¹ They justified their action by invoking the protection of a law a little over one hundred years old. For homesteads in Michigan were exempt from seizure for debts by statute in 1848 and by constitutional provision in 1850.

Security against want was a desideratum as prevalent in the nineteenth century as it is today, though it was expressed in different phraseology. Where today we ask "freedom from want" for all, in the second third of the nineteenth century every family dreamed of owning its own home which it could call the family homestead and of having some sort of guarantee that this home would not be taken away from it in times of economic distress. The possession of such a homestead was felt to be the best guaranty of economic security.

It was the desire to combat economic insecurity and to prevent the recurrence of the scenes witnessed during the depression which followed the panic of 1837, when family after family was turned off the land it had cleared or tilled for years, that gave birth to the idea of homestead exemption. Following the example of Texas in 1839, state after state, east as well as west, north as well as south, enacted homestead exemption laws. Not content with mere statutory exemption, between 1845 and 1860 Texas, Wisconsin, California, Michigan, Indiana, Maryland, and Minnesota incorporated homestead exemption provisions into their constitutions.²

¹*Newsweek*, 39:34 (June 16, 1952).

²Ben P. Poore, editor, *The Federal and State Constitutions, Colonial Charters, and Other Organic Laws of the United States*, 1:205, 513, 847, 1009-10; 2:1030, 1778, 2029 (Washington, D.C., 1878); Francis N. Thorpe, editor, *The Federal and State Constitutions, Colonial Charters, and Other Organic Laws of the States, Territories and Colonies . . .*, 1:404; 2:1075; 3:1726; 4:1965-66, 1993; 6:3561-62; 7:4078 (Washington, D.C., 1909).

The homestead exemption reserved the family abode, sometimes within certain specific limits of acreage and monetary valuation and sometimes only within the limits of a "reasonable amount of property," from distraint for debt.

Homestead exemptions were supported by divergent groups. They were demanded by the land reformers organized into the National Reform Association as a part of the agrarian doctrine of natural rights which its adherents hoped would prove to be a universal panacea. These National Reformers believed that man had a natural right to use the materials of nature necessary to his existence. Hence light, air, water, and soil were man's natural rights. Every natural right had three essential elements: individuality, inalienability, and equality. According to the doctrine of natural right to the soil, individuality was to be secured through "freedom of the public lands" by means of which individuals were to acquire ownership of part of the public domain through gratuitous grants of public land to actual settlers. Inalienability was to be obtained by homestead exemption. Equality was to be attained through "land limitation" whereby the amount of land an individual owned was to be restricted by an elaborate scheme for the gradual breaking up of the large family holdings in the east over a long period of years and by giving away only a certain number of acres of the public land to each pioneer.³ On the frontier homestead exemptions were championed to stimulate the settlement of the wilderness. In the east homestead exemptions were urged by workingmen in order to draw off or threaten to draw off the surplus labor supply so as to act as a safety valve in an economic crisis while merchants, industrialists, and others advocated homestead exemptions in order to prevent the emigration of the populace to regions which offered this enticing guaranty. Everywhere the debtor elements of society sought to secure homestead exemptions to further their own interests. Homestead exemptions were also supposed to inspire patriotism, for men will be apt to love and defend their country more if they own part of the land

³John R. Commons, editor, *A Documentary History of American Industrial Society*, 7:30-36, 288-324 (Cleveland, 1910); Henry E. Hoagland, "Humanitarianism (1840-1860)," in John R. Commons and others, *History of Labour in the United States*, 1:522-27, 531 (New York, 1918); Roy M. Robbins, *Our Landed Heritage: The Public Domain, 1776-1936*, 99 (Princeton, 1942); Helene S. Zahler, *Eastern Workingmen and National Land Policy, 1829-1862*, 33-36, 68-69 (New York, 1941).

of that country as their homestead. Then, too, homestead exemptions were regarded as promoting democracy by fostering a spirit of security which helped preserve a feeling of freedom and independence so vital to the continuance of democracy.

In Michigan the movement to ameliorate the lot of debtors to which the panic of 1837 and the ensuing depression had given such great momentum, the need for settlers to defend and develop the frontier state, the necessity of instilling patriotism in the hearts of its citizens shown by the Mexican War, the propaganda of the National Reformers for changes in the public land policy, and the humanitarian and democratizing reform tendencies characteristic of the pre-Civil War epoch were responsible for the adoption of homestead exemption.

In the constitutional convention of 1850 the Rev. John Davis Pierce was continuously referred to as the father of homestead exemption in Michigan. He proudly acknowledged the title saying, "True, I had the honor to introduce, in 1847, the homestead exemption bill, and to lend my aid in 1848 in accomplishing the object."⁴

John D. Pierce, however, is best remembered as the father of Michigan's educational system. It was through the influence that Pierce exerted on General Isaac E. Crary and Governor Stevens Thomson Mason that Pierce's ideas for the establishment of a system embracing all three levels of primary, secondary, and college education, headed by a superintendent of public instruction, were incorporated into Michigan's first constitution of 1835. As Michigan's first superintendent of public instruction, 1836-41, Pierce planned and organized Michigan's school system. He also published the first educational magazine in the Old Northwest when he edited *The Journal of Education* from 1838 to 1840. In addition, as a member of the 1850 constitutional convention, Pierce fought for and obtained the inclusion of free public education, without the payment of tuition, in Michigan's second constitution. Pierce was one of the great pioneers of American education. He was not a mere imitator of the New England educators. Pierce was the first superintendent of public instruction in the United States. His appointment on

⁴Report of the Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution of the State of Michigan. 1850, 657, 658, 660, 678 (Lansing, 1850).

July 26, 1836, antedated that of Horace Mann as secretary of the board of education in Massachusetts by almost a year; and Henry Barnard did not become school commissioner of Rhode Island till 1843. Pierce's first annual report in 1837, outlining his proposals for Michigan's educational system, was issued two years before Mann's first annual report. And Pierce's educational magazine appeared a year before Mann printed *The Common School Journal*.⁵

John D. Pierce was also a pioneer in the field of religion. He had come to Michigan as a missionary. He was one of the first white men to settle in Calhoun County. He held the first religious

⁵John D. Pierce, "Origin and Progress of the Michigan School System," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 1:37-45 (Lansing, 1877); Oliver C. Comstock, "Rev. John D. Pierce," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 5:184-87 (Lansing, 1884); "Hon. Isaac E. Crary, Our First Representative in Congress, and One of the Founders of Our School System," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 5:383; R. Clyde Ford, "The Life and Work of John D. Pierce," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 35:295-304 (Lansing, 1907); Lawton T. Hemans, "Michigan's Debt to Stevens T. Mason," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 35:246; Wales C. Martindale, "Discussion of 'The Life and Work of John D. Pierce,'" in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 35:304-308; Philip T. Colgrove, "Barry County's Contribution to the War for Democracy," in *Michigan History*, 3:387-89 (July, 1919); Harold C. Brooks, "Founding of the Michigan Public School System," in *Michigan History*, 33:291-306 (December, 1949); Rosamonde Hopkins Earle, "John Davis Pierce," in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, 14:583 (New York, 1934); Charles O. Hoyt and R. Clyde Ford, *John D. Pierce, Founder of the Michigan School System: A Study of Education in the Northwest*, 81-87, 124, 148-89 (Ypsilanti, 1905); James Edmonson, *The Legal and Constitutional Basis of a State School System: An Analysis of the Constitutional Provisions, Laws, and the Supreme Court Decisions Affecting the School System of the State of Michigan*, 2-4 (Bloomington, 1926); George L. Jackson, *The Development of State Control of Public Instruction in Michigan*, 25-26, 43, 76, 123-24, 133-35, 151, 205-6, 215-16, 225, 321-22 (Lansing, 1926); Amory Dwight Mayo, "Education in the Northwest During the First Half Century of the Republic, 1790-1840," in the *Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1894-95*, 2:1546-47 (Washington, D. C., 1896); Andrew C. McLaughlin, *History of Higher Education in Michigan*, 35 (*Contributions to American Educational History*, number 11, Herbert B. Adams, editor, in United States Bureau of Education, *Circular of Information Number 4*, 1891) (Washington, D. C., 1891); Daniel Putnam, *The Development of Primary and Secondary Public Education in Michigan. A Historical Sketch*, 20-64 (Ann Arbor, 1904); William Locke Smith, *Historical Sketches of Education in Michigan*, 3-6, 13-17, 129-31 (Lansing, 1881); Lawton T. Hemans, *Life and Times of Stevens Thomson Mason*, 258-59, 463 (Lansing, 1920); Kent Sagendorph, *Stevens Thomson Mason, Misunderstood Patriot*, 220, 268-73, 277 (New York, 1947); Webster Cook, *Michigan: Its History and Government*, 189-92 (New York, 1905); George N. Fuller, editor, *Historic Michigan, Land of the Great Lakes*, 1:348-50 (Lansing, 1924); Henry M. Utley and Byron M. Cutcheon, *Michigan As a Province, Territory and State*, 2:322, 373; 3:68, 80-81, 148, 161-62, 169, 221, 244-46, 292, 320-21, 337 (New York, 1906).

meetings in Calhoun, Jackson, Branch, and Eaton counties. He was the first Protestant minister to solemnize a marriage and to conduct a funeral service in western Michigan.⁶

As a missionary on the frontier Pierce knew the hardships the pioneers endured so that his interest in the debtor class is understandable. It becomes even more comprehensible when one considers his unfortunate childhood and the financial reverses he suffered in his business ventures.

John D. Pierce was a nephew of General Benjamin Pierce, governor of New Hampshire, and a cousin of Franklin B. Pierce, the fourteenth president of the United States. He lost his father at the age of two. His widowed mother, unable to support herself and her two small children, separated the family. John was left with his grandfather, who was kind but not gentle to the boy. His mother married a man who already had a large number of children so that there was no place for John. When the boy was ten, his grandfather died bequeathing him \$100 which he was to receive upon his twenty-first birthday. The homeless lad was taken in by an uncle; but the aunt, with several children of her own, regarded him as a burden and an intruder. The boy earned his keep, though, by doing chores and later by working as a field hand on his uncle's farm. He was dubbed "Stubborn John" by his playmates because of his confidence in his own powers, his independent thinking, and the tenacity with which he stuck to his views.⁷

⁶John D. Pierce, "Congregationalism in Michigan. A Sketch of Its Introduction, Establishment and Progress," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 12:351-61 (Lansing, 1888); Oliver C. Comstock, "History of Calhoun County," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 2:198, 214, 235, 237, 240 (Lansing, 1880); Michael Shoemaker, "Historical Sketch of the City of Jackson, Michigan," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 2:282; Oliver C. Comstock, "Trinity Church, Marshall," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 4:218 (Lansing, 1883); Philo R. Hurd, "An Historical Sketch of Congregationalism in Michigan, Brought Down to the Year 1884," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 7:103 (Lansing, 1886); Thomas McIntyre Cooley, *Michigan: A History of Governments*, seventh edition, 318-19, 322 (Boston, 1895).

⁷Hoyt and Ford, *John D. Pierce*, 56-58, 61. Additional brief biographies of John D. Pierce will be found in *American Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men, Michigan Volume*, district 2, 1:61-62 (Cincinnati, 1878); *Appletons' Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, 5:13 (New York, 1887); Stephen D. Bingham, editor, *Early History of Michigan with Biographies of State Officers, Members of Congress, Judges and Legislators*, 524-25 (Lansing, 1888); Silas Farmer, *The History of Detroit and Michigan*, 93, 731, 736 (Detroit, 1884); Charles Lanman, *The Red Book of Michigan*, 474-75 (Detroit and Washington, D. C., 1871); *Michigan Biographies*, 2:194 (Lansing, 1924).

At eighteen Pierce experienced a "conversion" that fired him with ambition to become a minister of the gospel. Like other farm youths in Massachusetts, John had received the usual two months of annual schooling during the wintertime. He realized that he needed more education to become a minister. Therefore, he obtained his uncle's permission to go out to work for himself. He worked for over two years on a neighbor's farm till he saved up \$100. With this sum and the \$100 left him by his grandfather, he set out to get an education. He was prepared for college by the Rev. Enoch Pond, whose alma mater, Brown University, he attended. He helped pay his way through college by teaching about three months a year. Upon his graduation in 1822, he was principal for a year at the academy at Wrentham, Massachusetts, Pond's birthplace, and it is possible the latter secured the position for him. He went to the Yale Theological Seminary during the fall semester of 1823. He continued his theological studies with Calvin Park of Brown University until 1824 when he was licensed to preach by the Congregational Society. From 1825 to 1829 he was pastor of a church in Oneida County, New York. Being a Freemason, Pierce was forced to leave when the anti-Masonic furor descended upon his community. He was principal of the academy in Goshen, Connecticut, for a year. Then, in 1831, he went to Michigan.⁸

As preacher and teacher Pierce was highly successful in Michigan. But his business ventures all seemed to be pursued by ill-luck. Along with others, he built a mill that proved unprofitable and even collapsed in a few years because of a poor foundation. He owned a thousand acre farm with some other men on a syndicate plan. Believing in thoroughbred stock, Pierce imported from New York the best grade of Merino sheep. Yet this costly experiment failed since all the woolen mills in Michigan had spindles for coarse wool only and his sheep produced a fine wool. In cattle raising and dairying he would have been more successful had it not been for the dishonesty of one of his employees. This man took a large herd to the Buffalo market and absconded with the proceeds, so that Pierce had to settle the bills out of his own pocket. Another time Pierce put in eighty acres of wheat expecting the railroad to be completed to Marshall by harvest time; but the railroad was not finished in accordance with

⁸Hoyt and Ford, *John D. Pierce*, 59-61, 66-71, 77.

Pierce's schedule and he had no market for his crop. The crowning calamity was the debt incurred by the other members of the syndicate without Pierce's knowledge. To satisfy the creditors, the land was sold.⁹

Thus John D. Pierce knew what it meant to be poor and to be a debtor. Consequently he became interested in the subject of exemptions at an early date. Indeed the 1842 chattel exemption law was called "Pierce's Pony Bill" by the opposition because Pierce had been instrumental in having a team, not exceeding \$80 in value, exempted from sale for debt. The financial limitation on the team was removed in 1843.¹⁰

The concern of the legislature with the problem of the debtor was due to the decade of depression in Michigan following the panic of 1837 when the overexpanded economic balloon of frenzied land speculation, wildcat banking, and booming internal improvements was pricked by President Andrew Jackson's specie circular. Economic chaos and disaster ensued. While the rich became poor, the poor became paupers and public charges. Bank notes were so worthless that they were used as wallpaper. Stagnation of business, bankruptcy, and foreclosures on homes and farms were visible everywhere. The legislature had to enact measures to aid debtors.¹¹

After the reprinting of Whittier's poem, "The Prisoner for Debt," in a newspaper in Detroit, where the legislature was meeting, the aboli-

⁹Hoyt and Ford, *John D. Pierce*, 78, 130-31.

¹⁰*Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, Passed at the Annual Session of 1842 . . . By Authority*, 70-71 (Detroit, 1842); *Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, Passed at the Annual Session of 1843 . . . By Authority*, 20-22 (Detroit, 1843); Elias S. Woodman, "Reminiscences of the Constitutional Convention of 1850," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 17:349 (Lansing, 1892); Hoyt and Ford, *John D. Pierce*, 132.

¹¹Bela Hubbard, *Memorials of a Half-Century*, 96-105 (New York and London, 1887); Hemans, Stevens Thomson Mason, 261, 269-75, 285-93, 423-44, 457; Arthur Pound, *Detroit, Dynamic City*, 164-69 (New York and London, 1940); Walter L. Dunham, *Banking and Industry in Michigan*, 46-56 (Detroit, 1929); George N. Fuller, *Economic and Social Beginnings of Michigan*, 67-69, 299, 399-400, 428-29 (Lansing, 1916); Oliver C. Comstock, "Internal Improvements," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 1:46-48; Alpheus Felch, "Early Banks and Banking in Michigan," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 2:111-24; Henry M. Utley, "The Wild Cat Banking System of Michigan," in *Michigan Historical Collections*, 5:209-22; Thomas M. Cooley, "Address on Laying the Corner Stone of the New Court House for Lenawee County at Adrian, June 28, 1884," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 7:527; James V. Campbell, *Outlines of the Political History of Michigan*, 490-508, 513-14 (Detroit, 1876); Fuller, *Historic Michigan*, 1:352-79; Charles Moore, *History of Michigan*, 1:350-55, 360-64 (Chicago, 1915); Utley and Cutcheon, *Michigan*, 3:82-161, 170-71.

tion of imprisonment for debt in Michigan was provided for in 1837. The legislators passed a joint resolution, which had the force of law since the governor approved it March 21, 1837. This resolution requested the commissioner in charge of revising the laws of the state not to embody the principle of imprisonment for debt in the collection laws. Unfortunately, the revised statutes were prepared so hastily and haphazardly that the 1838 code of laws enacted by the legislature allowed imprisonment for a debt larger than \$10, except in the case of females. This error was rectified by the act of April 10, 1839, which abolished imprisonment for debt though it punished fraudulent debtors.¹²

From the person of the debtor, the general assembly turned its attention to property of the debtor. A law was passed at the special session of 1837 permitting lands sold on purchase mortgage foreclosures to be redeemed within one year upon the payment of the selling price plus 10 per cent interest. An act to exempt grain while growing and other unharvested crops from sale under execution was approved April 1, 1840, and was to remain in effect ten months unless repealed sooner.¹³ This moratorium or stay law was explained simply by one contemporary: "There was no money, and our merchants who tried to do business had to trust the farmers on the strength of their growing crops."¹⁴ The next year, on March 27, a bill was adopted forbidding the sale of property for less than two thirds of its appraised value. This was supplemented three weeks later by a statute stipulating that such property could be redeemed within six months by paying the sum for which it was sold and 10 per cent interest. In

¹²William A. Fletcher resigned as chief justice of Michigan in 1842 before the expiration of his term partly because of the criticism of his codification of the law in 1838. *Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan: Passed at the Annual Session of 1837. By Authority*, 299 (Detroit 1837); *The Revised Statutes of the State of Michigan. Passed at the Adjourned Session of 1837, and the Regular Session of 1838*, 581-617 (Detroit, 1838); *Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, Passed at the Annual Session of 1839 . . .*, 76-83 (Detroit, 1839); Campbell, *Political History of Michigan*, 509-10; Fuller, *Economic and Social Beginnings of Michigan*, 88-89; Utley and Cutcheon, *Michigan*, 3:82, 93-94, 145, 158, 160.

¹³The 1840 law was not repealed; its provisions were incorporated in the 1843 chattel exemption law without any time limitation. "Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan; Passed at the Special Session of 1837. Begun and held at the City of Detroit, on the 12th of June," in *Acts of the Legislature 1837*, 315; *Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, Passed at the Annual Session of 1840 . . .*, 224-25 (Detroit, 1840).

¹⁴William J. Etten, editor, *A Citizens' History of Grand Rapids, Michigan*, 43 (no place, no date).

1842 a somewhat similar law was enacted, except that the debtor's real estate was not to be sold but was to be transferred to his creditors at two thirds of its appraised value and was to be redeemable within six months. The redemption period was extended to one year in 1843. In addition, in 1842 and again in 1843, chattel exemption laws were passed expanding the list of the debtor's personal property to be reserved from distraint for debt.¹⁵

Then in 1847, on Monday, January 11, a week after the House had convened, John D. Pierce, as representative from Calhoun County, introduced a homestead exemption resolution. Yet the measure actually originated in the Senate. There a homestead exemption resolution was introduced the preceding Saturday, January 9, by the wealthy merchant and farmer, John P. Cook,¹⁶ who probably took this step at Pierce's instigation. Cook was a member of the 1850 constitutional convention where Pierce was credited with being the father of homestead exemption in Michigan, with having introduced the homestead exemption measure in the 1847 legislature, and with being responsible for the enactment of that bill into law. Cook did not dispute any of these statements.¹⁷

¹⁵*Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, Passed at the Annual Session of 1841 . . .*, 45-47, 151 (Detroit, 1841); *Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan 1842*, 70-71, 135-38; *Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan 1843*, 20-22, 155-60.

¹⁶*Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan, 1847*, 2, 35, 112, 217-18, 532, 534, 537-38, 544 (Detroit, 1847); *Journal of the Senate of the State of Michigan, 1847*, 1, 25, 250, 289, 372, 507 (Detroit, 1847).

¹⁷John P. Cook's participation in the convention's debate on homestead exemption was inconsequential. If he made a speech on the subject, it was not recorded in the proceedings of the convention. He did propose an unimportant amendment that was defeated. Cook was a native New Yorker. His father died when he was two, and two years later his mother remarried. Because of the limited means of his family, Cook worked as a farm hand and carpenter. At the age of twenty, he moved to Michigan where he became a rich merchant and farmer. Later he engaged in banking and the lumber industry. Although he himself had only a common school education, he was the first treasurer and the first postmaster of Hillsdale County, a member of its board of education for fifteen years, and a trustee of Hillsdale College for twenty years. *Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, v, 657, 658, 660, 672, 678; *American Biographical History, Michigan Volume, district 2*, 1:22-23; Bingham, *Early History of Michigan with Biographies*, 193; *Michigan Biographies*, 1:196; Frederick M. Holloway, "Hillsdale County from 1829 to 1836 Inclusive," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 1:171, 179; Edward H. Thomson, "The City of Flint," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 3:443 (Lansing, 1881); "Remarks of Dr. L. M. Jones," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 4:256.

Although the homestead exemption measure was passed by the Senate in 1847, it was killed in the lower chamber. Undaunted by failure, Pierce re-introduced the bill in the next session of the House of Representatives.¹⁸ Pierce regarded homestead exemption as a debtor issue. In February 1848 he declared:

I wish to see the adoption of a system of legislation that shall care not merely for money but for the man—which shall secure a home to every man and his family who shall hereafter earn one—to put it beyond the reach of mere contingencies to turn a defenceless family into the street. This, Sir, is the object of this bill—not to give a man a home, but to preserve it to him when once acquired.¹⁹

When he took the floor again on March 4, Pierce added that homestead exemption was as much a part of the movement to improve the condition of the debtor as the abolition of imprisonment for debt and that by means of the homestead exemption he wanted to preserve the debtor's spirit of independence and his patriotism.

It [homestead exemption] will have a tendency to create an independent yeomanry and to attach men to the soil, to their country; to remove a vast amount of mental suffering in families. . . . Those who have had no experience in these matters, whose business has not led them into contact with the poorer classes, have no conception of the amount of distress that has been created by our oppressive collection laws. During the half century that I have lived, I have witnessed much of it, from the incarceration of a man in a loathsome prison house with felons, and from the turning of families into the highway. For weeks and months, from day to day, the wife and her children, the widow and the orphan, live in constant expectation that the final process of law will be had, and then where to go they know not. These days are passed in bitterness and tears, with many sleepless nights, for such things cannot be done without producing much mental agony. . . . And it should not be the policy of the government to step in and arm the creditor with unlimited powers over the debtor. . . .

Now, Sir, I wish to see every man protected in his home, the strong

¹⁸*Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan*. 1848, 32, 84, 117, 218-19, 242-43, 359, 369, 386-87, 395-96, 401-3, 407-12, 421-22, 431, 445, 544-45, 556, 579-82 (Lansing, 1848); *Journal of the Senate of the State of Michigan, at the Annual Session of the Legislature for 1848*, 3, 374, 384, 457-59, 501-503, 517, 519 (Lansing, 1848); Hoyt and Ford, *John D. Pierce*, 131-36; Earle, "John Davis Pierce," in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, 14:583; "Address of the President, Judge Albert Miller," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 1:16.

¹⁹Hoyt and Ford, *John D. Pierce*, 132-33.

arm of the government thrown around him, that he may have occasion to love his country and its institutions, and not to curse the day of his birth because he finds himself in a land bearing down his spirits and crushing his energies, and sending him out upon the highway a wreck and a vagrant.²⁰

Through Pierce's untiring efforts, homestead exemption became law in Michigan on March 25, 1848. This statute exempted either an urban homestead of one lot or a rural homestead of forty acres, with the dwelling and its appurtenances thereon, from forced sale on execution for any debt growing out of a contract made after July 3. This reservation, however, did not extend to taxes nor to any mortgage, though the mortgage or other alienation of such land by the owner, if a married man, was not valid without his wife's signature.²¹

Perhaps it was the difficulty he had encountered in getting the legislature to enact homestead exemption into law that made John D. Pierce so adamant in insisting that the principle of exempting both personal and real property from sale for debt be incorporated into the organic law of the state when that document was revised in 1850. He openly voiced his distrust of the legislature on the floor of Michigan's constitutional convention: "The object is that no hasty legislation may upset that principle. . . . The object . . . was to restrict the action of the Legislature, so that the principle may not be endangered."²²

The majority report of the committee on exemptions, however, recommended that this topic be omitted from the constitution and be left entirely to the legislature. The report stated that

Any constitutional provision on this subject, unless in restraint, would manifestly be unnecessary and unwise, and clearly better left to legislative discretion, so to mould the exercise of the power as to meet, without restraint, the changing circumstances of society, and enable them to grant such measure of relief as the exigencies of the time really seem to require.²³

²⁰Hoyt and Ford, *John D. Pierce*, 133-34.

²¹*Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, Passed at the Annual Session of 1848 . . . By Authority*, 124-25 (Lansing, 1848).

²²*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 656.

²³*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 428-29.

The president of the convention, Judge Daniel Goodwin,²⁴ had purposely loaded the committee with these opponents since he was strictly partisan in politics and he himself was hostile to homestead exemption.²⁵

But the delegates in the convention rejected the majority report and adopted as the basis for discussion the minority report, submitted by John D. Pierce, which proposed the inclusion of a homestead exemption section in the constitution.²⁶ They felt that popular sentiment supported homestead exemption and that embodying the principle in the constitution would make it more permanent.

Homestead exemption was considered as a debtor issue by the

²⁴Daniel Goodwin had been a classmate of Abraham Lincoln's secretary of state, William H. Seward, at Union College and had studied law with John C. Spencer, who became chief justice of New York's highest tribunal. After practicing law at Geneva, New York, Goodwin moved to Indiana where he was stricken with consumption, losing the use of one lung. When his father passed away in 1825 in Detroit, Goodwin went there to take care of his father's family. Goodwin was United States district attorney, associate justice of Michigan's supreme court 1843-46, and for thirty years (1851-81) judge of the circuit court for the Northern Peninsula. He was a delegate to the 1836 convention of assent that accepted the terms of Congress under which Michigan was admitted to statehood. He was also a member of Michigan's constitutional convention of 1867. Goodwin's wife was a lineal descendant of Governor William Bradford of Mayflower fame. Harold M. Dorr, editor, *The Michigan Constitutional Conventions of 1835-36: Debates and Proceedings*, 442-43, 451-52, 455, 458 (Ann Arbor and London, 1940); *American Biographical History, Michigan Volume*, district 1, 1:66; *Appletons' Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, 2:682; Bingham, *Early History of Michigan with Biographies*, 297; Farmer, *Detroit*, 90-91, 176, 187, 194; Fuller, *Historic Michigan*, 3:69; Charles Lanman, *Biographical Annals of the Civil Government of the United States, During Its First Century. From Original and Official Sources*, 168 (Washington, D. C., 1876); Lanman, *The Red Book of Michigan*, 442; *Michigan Biographies*, 1:337; George Irving Reed, editor, *Bench and Bar of Michigan: A Volume of History and Biography*, 9 (Chicago, 1897); Utley and Cutcheon, *Michigan*, 2:361; 3:337; George C. Bates, "By-Gones of Detroit—General Hugh Brady," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 2:576; James V. Campbell, "Governors and Judges of Michigan," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 3:114-17; William M. Evarts, "Secretary Evarts' List of Territorial Officers," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 3:121-22; J. L. Vandewerker, "Memorial of Levi Bishop," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 5:562; Samuel P. Ely, "Historical Address. Delivered July Fourth, 1876," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 7:174; J. Wilkie Moore, "Wayne County," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 13:284-89 (Lansing, 1889).

²⁵*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, v, vii, 19, 428-29, 741; Hezekiah G. Wells, "A Sketch of the Members of the Constitutional Conventions of 1835 and 1850," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 3:39; Woodman, "Reminiscences," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 17:347.

²⁶*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 240, 428-30, 656, 660, 661, 664, 667, 671-72, 676.

members of Michigan's constitutional convention who looked upon the movement to ameliorate the plight of the debtor as a phase of the general humanitarian and democratizing reform trend of the antebellum era. During their discussion of homestead exemption, they referred to "the spirit of the age," the "liberal" and "progressive" reform temper of the times, "the cause of humanity," "the good of the community," and the demand of "public opinion."²⁷ John D. Pierce, recognized as the principal champion of homestead exemption in the constituent assembly, claimed that

The measure is so accordant with the real spirit of progress, so just in itself, so wisely expedient in all exigencies to which families are liable, so alleviating when ill fortune bears them down, and so consonant with the popular sentiment and the principles of true Christian morality, that no power on earth can prevent its universal adoption.²⁸

Farmer J. Van Valkenburgh, a New Yorker by birth, spoke in a similar vein:

I had hoped, sir, this measure would meet with no opposition in this enlightened body, and in this age of progress and improvement. . . . We boast, Mr. Chairman, that we live in an age of progress, in a day of reform, and we hope soon to see these relics of the dark ages, these vestiges of barbarism, blotted from our statute books; we hope to see the time when . . . the cupidity of man shall not be aided and encouraged by oppressive laws.²⁹

It was believed that homestead exemption would strengthen democratic government by preserving the debtor's spirit of freedom. The poor man was no longer to be "a grovelling creature, not daring to lift his head," according to Jabez Gridley Sutherland whose twenty-four years made him the youngest man in the assemblage.³⁰ Yet he

²⁷*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 656, 659-61, 664, 666-68, 671, 679-81.

²⁸*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 659.

²⁹*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, vi, 666-67.

³⁰*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, vi, 677. In 1873 Jabez Gridley Sutherland moved to Salt Lake City for his health, and continued his legal practice there. He was the first president of the Salt Lake Bar Association. He delivered a series of lectures on jurisprudence at Deseret University, now the University of Utah. In 1882 he published a treatise on the law of damages in three volumes. The last five years of his life he spent in California. *Biographical Directory of the American Congress 1774-1927*, 1587 (Washington, D. C., 1928); Lanman, *Biographical Annals*, 414; *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, 11:92-93 (New York, 1901); Bingham, *Early History of Michigan with Biographies*,

distinguished himself so in that body that he was later elected to the state legislature, the bench, the United States Congress, and the 1867 constitutional convention in Michigan.

The main reason for the adoption of homestead exemption by Michigan's 1850 constituent assembly was to improve the condition of the debtor—to provide the debtor with the means of making a living so as to repay his creditors and keep his family from public relief or private charity rolls, and to elevate public morals by decreasing the kind of crime bred by pauperism. These aims were eloquently expounded by farmer Calvin Britain, who had been the first settler in the town of St. Joseph in Berrien County, had been a member of the territorial legislative council, had served in both houses of the state legislature, and was elected lieutenant-governor in 1851.³¹

Mr. Chairman, what is the object of the friends of this article? . . . Why, sir, it is simply by leaving enough in the hands of the poor debtor to enable him to live honestly, until he can meet all his obligations, and thus, so far as relates to the necessities of life, placing him upon the same footing as the rich man.

This would of course promote the debtor interest by enabling the debtor to live until he can pay his debts. It would promote the public interest by relieving the public from the support of the debtor's family. It would protect and even promote the creditor's interest, by preventing one creditor from destroying a debtor to the prejudice of all the other creditors. It would promote public morals by removing all necessity for theft, perjury, and fraud, and enable you to punish every violation of law as an unnecessary crime; and it would, in my opinion, secure more happiness, more honesty, and a larger amount of property in the hands of the whole people for the support of life, than could be secured by any other measure.³²

The opposition disputed this view, however, claiming that homestead exemption was "subversive of . . . personal economy and commercial integrity," protected "the dishonest portion of the com-

623-24; Lanman, *The Red Book of Michigan*, 488; *Michigan Biographies*, 2:341; Charles Richard Tuttle, *General History of the State of Michigan*, 149-50 (Detroit, 1874); Utley and Cutcheon, *Michigan*, 3:337; "Michigan Congressmen," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 3:122-24; "Death of Randolph Strickland," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 4:234-35.

³¹John J. Adam, "Early History of Lenawee County," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 2:377; Bingham, *Early History of Michigan with Biographies*, 123; *Michigan Biographies*, 2:109; Utley and Cutcheon, *Michigan*, 3:353-54.

³²*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 669. See also 668, 671, 681.

munity alone," and "should be called a premium for dishonesty."³³ Stringent collection laws were necessary to maintain a high level of mortality and public virtue. "I have had some experience in the working of this exemption principle," Andrew S. Robertson, a lawyer who had been born in England and educated at the University of Glasgow,³⁴ told his colleagues.

I have seen, in the course of my little experience, a man who perhaps was an honorable man, but who may have been in the habit of squandering his means at the tavern, eating off a table that was not paid for, off plates that were owed for, and even of meat which was cooked on a stove for which he owed. Relying upon the undue protection which the law afforded, he says to his creditor, "you cannot throw me into prison—you cannot take away these things, or force me to pay my debts—the exemption laws protect me."³⁵

Robertson commended the severity of the collection laws of Scotland as responsible for Scottish integrity, and "inviolable honor in meeting liabilities prevails more in that country than in any other country with which I am acquainted." Deeming a legal threat of punishment sufficient in itself, though absolutely essential, to encourage honesty and protect creditors, Robertson saw nothing oppressive or inhuman in imprisonment for debt. "I came from a country where you could put a man into jail for debt," he related, "but yet they did not fill their jails with debtors. Creditors . . . confide in the honesty of debtors, and but seldom have recourse to legal remedies for the enforcement of their claims".³⁶ To refute that creditors refrained from imprisoning debtors where the law permitted such action, Lorenzo M. Mason, former prosecuting attorney and state senator of St. Clair County,³⁷ noted that "there are very many

³³*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 429. See also 660, 663, 666.

³⁴Andrew S. Robertson was elected to the state senate in 1863. He died while in office. Bingham, *Early History of Michigan with Biographies*, 558; *Michigan Biographies*, 2:239.

³⁵*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 665.

³⁶*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 657, 664.

³⁷In 1851 Lorenzo M. Mason moved to Detroit, where he gave up the practice of law to engage in lumbering and banking, was police commissioner for four years, and was inspector of the Detroit House of Correction for ten years. He also represented the city in both houses of the state legislature. Bingham, *Early History of Michigan with Biographies*, 436; Farmer, *Detroit*, 100-102, 205, 218, 862; *Michigan Biographies*, 2:83-84.

men, not rogues, honest men who have sacrificed all their property in Canada, and have been compelled to come over here in order to escape imprisonment for their debts."³⁸ John D. Pierce pointed out that "in the city of London alone, six thousand are yearly imprisoned for debts under fifty dollars." If harsh collection laws were evidence of "a high state of morality, of civilization and public virtue," Pierce taunted satirically, then the Romans were highly civilized, for under their laws the debtor could be flogged, incarcerated, sold into perpetual bondage along with his whole family, or "could be cut up and pieced out among his creditors in proportion to his indebtedness to each." This successfully squelched the opposition on this particular argument.³⁹

Instead, the foes of homestead exemption raised anew the old hue and cry that the poor would be unable to obtain credit. "I recollect hearing in the Legislature of this State in 1837, just such arguments as have been used here, against non-imprisonment" for debt, retorted John D. Pierce. Yet commercial credit had not diminished nor had the poor been hindered in getting credit as a result of Michigan's abolition of imprisonment for debt, her extension of chattel exemptions, and her adoption of homestead exemption. Wisconsin and other states that had enacted personal and real property exemptions had found them to be a boon to business rather than a deterrent to credit, asserted Pierce, stressing the importance of past experience.⁴⁰

That homestead exemption was considered an expansion of the chattel exemption principle, which had always been regarded solely as a debtor issue, may be gleaned from the insertion at the head of the homestead exemption provision written into Michigan's 1850 constitution of a section exempting a minimum of \$500 worth of personal property. Solicitude for the debtor was responsible for the inclusion of this chattel exemption in Michigan's fundamental law.

In arguing for chattel exemption, Pierce asked

In the name of common sense, how can an honest man pay his debts if he cannot earn sufficient to liquidate them. . . . If you take away a

³⁸*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 675.

³⁹*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 660. See also 661, 664, 666, 677-78.

⁴⁰*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 677. See also 63-65, 656-57, 661, 663-64, 676, 678, 680-81.

man's tool, he cannot work; . . . There are few families, . . . who have not a house, or a few pigs or cows to be protected. Are not their beds, and tables, and chairs, and their little domestic utensils to be protected?⁴¹

The motivating influence of anxiety for the debtor and his family in incorporating homestead exemption into Michigan's organic law was demonstrated even more cogently by the two concluding sections of the measure exempting the children's and the widow's homesteads. These clauses exempted the homestead after the death of the owner during the minority of his children or during the widowhood of his childless spouse provided she did not own a homestead in her own right.⁴²

Furthermore, the convention's interest in the debtor problem was also indicated in its embodying the abolition of imprisonment for debt and for the nonpayment of militia fines in the judiciary article of the constitution.⁴³

Yet debtor reform alone was not accountable for the inscribing of homestead exemption into Michigan's 1850 constitution. The debates of the convention clearly reflect the propaganda of the land reform movement. Although the National Reformers and their work were

⁴¹*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*, 1850, 663. Michigan's 1850 constitution, Article XVI, Section 1: "The personal property of every resident of this State, to consist of such property only as shall be designated by law, shall be exempted to the amount of not less than five hundred dollars, from sale on execution or other final process of any court, issued for the collection of any debt contracted after the adoption of this constitution." *Proceedings and Debates to Revise the Constitution*, 1850, xxxvi; Poore, *Federal and State Constitutions*, 1:1009-10; Thorpe, *Federal and State Constitutions*, 4:1965-66.

⁴²Article XVI, Section 3: "The homestead [sic] of a family, after the demise of the owner thereof, shall be exempt from the payment of his debts, contracted after the adoption of this constitution, in all cases during the minority of his children." Article XVI, Section 4: "If the owner of a homestead die, leaving a widow, but no children, the same shall be exempt, and the rents and profits thereof shall accrue to her benefit during the time of her widowhood, unless she be the owner of a homestead in her own right." *Proceedings and Debates to Revise the Constitution*, 1850, xxxvi; Poore, *Federal and State Constitutions*, 1:1009-10; Thorpe, *Federal and State Constitutions*, 4:1965-66.

⁴³Article VI, Section 33: "No person shall be imprisoned for debt arising out of or founded on a contract, expressed or implied, except in cases of fraud or breach of trust, or of moneys collected by public officers or in any professional employment. No person shall be imprisoned for a militia fine in time of peace." *Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*, 1850, xxxi; Poore, *Federal and State Constitutions*, 1:1003; Thorpe, *Federal and State Constitutions*, 4:1956; Lena London, "The Militia Fine 1830-1860," in *Military Affairs*, 15:133-44 (Fall, 1951).

never specifically mentioned, nevertheless their tactics were employed by the delegates and their philosophy and their phraseology were reiterated in the speeches.

A favorite device of the National Reformers was to allude to the precedents of ancient history to show that their precepts were not new but had proved practical and beneficial in the past. John D. Pierce reminded his associates that

the Hebrew code provided that all debts should be cancelled every seventh year. At the close of that year all were free from debt. Besides, no creditor could even take the landed estate of the debtor, and sell it for payment. He might take the use of it for a time, but never the title; and on every fiftieth year, the year of jubilee, every one returned to his inheritance. This code provided for the man and the family.

Robertson replied that

we have absolutely more liberal laws upon that subject than had the Jews themselves, whom the gentleman has brought upon the tapis as affording a convincing authority in support of the correctness of his position. Why, sir, in this State, we wipe out a debt in six years; that is our statute of limitations.

Another opponent of homestead exemption, Henry Fralick, who had shipped two years before the mast on a whaling vessel,⁴⁴ hoped

⁴⁴After a colorful career on the Erie Canal and on the high seas, Henry Fralick returned to Michigan and engaged in dry goods merchandising, lumber and flour milling, banking, real estate, furniture manufacturing, and the coal and wood business. In addition, he was a notary public, a justice of the peace, a supervisor, a county auditor, a school officer for thirty years, the president of the Grand Rapids Board of Education for four years, a trustee and treasurer of Olivet College for twelve years, member of the executive committee of the Michigan State Agricultural Society for eighteen years and its president for two years, and United States jury commissioner for the Western District of Michigan for eight years. He also served in both houses of Michigan's state legislature. Henry Fralick, "Address of the President," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 9:1-5 (Lansing, 1886); "Autobiography of Henry Fralick, Twelfth President of the Michigan State Pioneer Society," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 10:1-3 (Lansing, 1888); *American Biographical History*, district 5, 2:35-36; *Michigan Biographies*, 2:307; Farmer, *Detroit*, 91, 101, 125, 130; Albert Baxter, *History of the City of Grand Rapids, Michigan*, 680-81 (New York and Grand Rapids, 1891); Dwight Goss, *History of Grand Rapids and Its Industries*, 420, 426, 958 (Chicago, 1906); Bingham, *Early History of Michigan with Biographies*, 275-76; Utley and Cutcheon, *Michigan*, 4:100-101, 165; Abraham B. Markham, "Early History of the Township of Plymouth," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 2:549-67; "Early History of Olivet College," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 3:413; "List of Members of the State Pioneer Society," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 4:169; "Officers of the Pioneer and Historical Society of Michigan, 1874-1887," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 10:vii; *Michigan Historical Collections*,

the convention would not use the Jews as a model, for "they sold their Saviour for thirty pieces of silver." Pierce answered that

I did not refer to them . . . as an example—merely to their laws. The gentleman says also, that they sold their Saviour for thirty pieces of silver. The gentleman would sell every family in the State, according to his reasoning, for a less sum.

A burst of laughter greeted this remark.⁴⁵

The terminology of the land reformers was heard on the floor of Michigan's constituent assembly. Their slogans resounded in such expressions as man's natural right to use the elements of nature necessary to his existence, man's natural right to the soil, man's right to a free and inalienable homestead.

The natural rights theory of the National Reformers was promulgated by John D. Pierce.

Man has a natural right to a free use of air—it is an element essential to his existence. So of water—he cannot exist without it. The same is true of light—man would soon droop and die without it. But the right to these essential elements is no clearer, no more certain than the right of man to a place on this earth. This right is clearly inalienable. To deprive any man or any family of a home, and turn them out as vagabonds, under any pretence whatever, is downright tyranny.⁴⁶

The agrarian reformers' doctrine that the homestead should be "free" and "inalienable" was also supported by John D. Pierce:

The homestead [sic] should be free, inviolable. No man—no woman—no child—no family should be driven from home, because the hand of adversity presses hard upon them. . . . It is the high duty of the State to throw around every homestead, every fireside, every hearth-stone, the shield of its protection—to stay the proud waves of wealth, and capital, and usury, from carrying desolation over the homes of suffering, crushed, bleeding humanity. . . . Free religion, free schools, free trade, and a free home, are the essential elements of liberty. The home must be inviolate, or liberty is but a name, and freedom a mockery.⁴⁷

18:13-14 (Lansing, 1892); "Report of the Corresponding Secretary," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 18:33; William N. Cook, "Kent County," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 18:222; J. Wilkie Moore, "Wayne County," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 18:308; Riley C. Crawford, "Memoir of Hon. Henry Fralick," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 18:318-21.

⁴⁵*Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 658, 663, 665.

⁴⁶*Proceedings and Debates to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 660.

⁴⁷*Proceedings and Debates to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 659.

The land reformers' contention that the land should be distributed more equitably among the populace is discernible in Calvin Britain's appeal that homestead exemption more than "any other measure" would "secure a larger amount of property in the hands of the whole people".⁴⁸

Moreover the National Reformers' preoccupation with workingmen was reflected in the convention's deliberations. John D. Pierce spoke in terms of the class struggle of capital versus labor and described at length how capital robbed labor of its just compensation.

By means of special laws, privileges, charters and grants, . . . vast masses of capital are accumulated in a few hands . . . without their producing anything. . . . The very men who created the capital, and from whom it was wrested by means of special legislation, borrow back this very product of their own labor, and are forced to pay interest upon it. . . . It is not enough that the few must have all the surplus products of labor; but if the laborer fails to pay interest on that very surplus capital which his own hands produce, and which was wrongfully taken from him, all that he hath remaining must be taken away. . . . The officer is commanded by law to levy and distress—aye, sir, levy and distress!—to seize the goods and chattels, and if these failed to pay, the body was graciously provided for!

The spirit of aggregated capital is aggressive. . . . Soulless, heartless, remorseless, conscienceless . . . robbing labor of its reward, it reduces to, and leaves man and his family in, abject poverty; not satisfied, it takes his cot, and turns him, wife and children, out. . . . But latterly a voice has come up from the living masses. . . . They are awakening to a knowledge of their rights, and demanding that labor shall have its reward; that the laborer shall not be turned out penniless and houseless.⁴⁹

The adversaries of homestead exemption also claimed to be interested in the welfare of the workingmen. Robertson proposed that "one thing which might probably make this provision more acceptable" was to

make an exception and say "except for labor done." The man who owns forty acres of land, and is possessed of thousands of dollars worth of property, may owe me for a day's work, as a mechanic or laborer; yet, I cannot compel him to pay me. I say then, let it be so amended that he shall be forced to do justice.⁵⁰

Fralick was in complete accord:

⁴⁸*Proceedings and Debates to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 669.

⁴⁹*Proceedings and Debates to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 658-59.

⁵⁰*Proceedings and Debates to Revise the Constitution*. 1850, 665.

The really poor man, the man who labors from day to day, is not protected by this provision. He cannot collect his daily wages upon which the support of himself and his family depends. No, sir, he cannot, for the right to do so is taken away from him. Yet, strange anomaly, the class least able to protect itself is the one which is left utterly unprotected by this article. . . . The poor man has no property except his wages, the compensation for his toil; but under this provision, he cannot assert his just rights; he cannot enforce his claims for the price of his labor against the rich man; he is effectively debarred from so doing.⁵¹

A mechanic's or laborer's lien was unnecessary, according to John D. Pierce, for "a man who has the name of not paying his day laborers, never gets another." However, homestead exemption was necessary, he declared, because "there are but few in this State so poor as not to have something to be protected."⁵²

The convention agreed with Pierce's conclusion. It rejected the mechanic's lien amendment, yet inserted a homestead exemption provision into Michigan's constitution of 1850. A rural homestead of forty acres or an urban homestead of a lot, together with the dwelling and appurtenances thereon, not exceeding \$1,500 in value, was exempt from distraint for debt.⁵³

As in the other northern states of the Mississippi Valley,⁵⁴ the factors which led to the inclusion of homestead exemption in Michigan's revised instrument of government were the humanitarian and democratizing tendencies of the times; the crusade to improve the

⁵¹*Proceedings and Debates to Revise the Constitution. 1850, 662.*

⁵²*Proceedings and Debates to Revise the Constitution. 1850, 663.*

⁵³Michigan's 1850 constitution, Article XVI, Section 2: "Every homestead [sic] of not exceeding forty acres of land, and the dwelling house thereon, and the appurtenances to be selected by the owner thereof, and not included in any town-plat, city, or village; or instead thereof, at the option of the owner, any lot in any city, village, or recorded town-plat, or such parts of lots as shall be equal thereto, and the dwelling house thereon, and its appurtenances, owned and occupied by any resident of the State, not exceeding in value fifteen hundred dollars, shall be exempt from forced sale on execution, or any other final process from a court, for any debt contracted after the adoption of the constitution. Such exemption shall not extend to any mortgage thereon lawfully obtained; but such mortgage or other alienation of such land by the owner thereof, if a married man, shall not be valid without the signature of the wife to the same." See footnote 41.

⁵⁴Lena London, "Homestead Exemption in the Indiana Constitution of 1851," in the *Indiana Magazine of History*, 44:267-80 (September, 1948); Lena London, "Homestead Exemption in the Wisconsin Constitution," in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 32:176-84 (December, 1948); Lena London, "The Adoption of Homestead Exemption in Iowa," in the *Iowa Journal of History*, 48:133-40 (April, 1950).

condition of the debtor; the land reform movement and propaganda of the National Reformers; the desire of the west to attract settlers by offering special economic inducements; and the hope of fostering the well-being of the family as the basis of a sound society, of promoting obedience to and respect for law, of inspiring patriotism, and of stimulating a spirit of freedom and independence necessary to the continued existence of democracy.

Michigan News

ROBERT F. BAUMAN resigned his position as curator of the Dearborn Historical Museum, which he has held since March, 1951, to accept an appointment as research historian with the law firm of Harrison, Thomas, Spangenberg and Hull of Cleveland, Ohio. Both Dearborn and Michigan have been enriched by Mr. Bauman's efforts in museum activities. He appeared as a reviewer in the March, 1953 issue of *Michigan History* with a review of *From Greene Ville to Fallen Timbers*, edited by Dwight L. Smith; and as a contributor in the September, 1952 issue with his article "*Kansas, Canada, or Starvation.*"

HOWARD PECKHAM, since 1945 director of the Indiana Historical Bureau, has returned to Michigan to assume the directorship of the Clements Library at the University of Michigan. Dr. Peckham assumed his new duties September 1. He was curator of manuscripts at Clements Library from 1936 to 1944. Dr. Peckham is author of *Pontiac's Siege of Detroit*, and, with Colton Storm, of *Invitation to Book Collecting*.

THE NEW OFFICERS OF THE MARINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Detroit for 1953-54 are: president, Robert A. Zeleznik; secretary, John E. Poole; treasurer, John R. Campbell; and re-elected vice president, John C. Goodrich. The first meeting for the season was held on Saturday afternoon and evening, September 12, on the grounds of the Fort Malden Museum at Amherstburg. This is the traditional location of the opening and concluding meetings of each season. Speaker at the September meeting was Mr. Al. Palmer.

MUSEUM VISITORS to the Michigan Mammal hall at the Grand Rapids Public museum have a treat in the diorama just completed this year. It shows a buffalo family, like those that roamed the southeastern section of the state before the coming of the white man, resting at a river bank while a camouflaged Ottawa Indian

with his bow and arrow makes a stealthy approach. A year of research and many hours of labor went into the making of this authentic and perfect diorama.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS of a study sequence for graduate students who wish to specialize as school historians have been set up by the school of education at the University of Michigan. The required graduate courses are problems in educational sociology, history of European education, history of education in the United States, and social interpretation. The study sequence for school historians is intended to equip graduates for the position and function of historian for a school system. The practical advantages of establishing such a position are described by Dr. Claude Eggertsen, associate professor of education at the University of Michigan in an article entitled "The Place of Social Memory in the Solution of School Problems," which appeared in *The University of Michigan School of Education Bulletin*, 24.83-86 (March, 1953). According to Dr. Eggertsen, the failure of a school administrator to find satisfactory solutions, or a widespread misunderstanding of his proposals "is often due to a lack of historical perspective." These difficulties can be remedied by appointing a school historian whose task would be to "study the backgrounds of crucial school problems" so that the administrator can present his solution of the problem armed with a knowledge of its history.

THROUGH AN AGREEMENT with University Microfilms of Ann Arbor, the Michigan Historical Commission has made available to libraries the 1953 and future volumes of *Michigan History* in Microfilm form. Microfilm copies of the magazine are distributed only at the end of the volume year. Sales are restricted by University Microfilms to those receiving the paper edition of *Michigan History*. The microfilm is furnished on metal or plastic reels suitably labelled. According to University Microfilms, the cost of the film edition of *Michigan History* is approximately the same as the cost of binding the same number of issues. Anyone interested in obtaining the microfilm edition of the magazine should address their inquiries to the University Microfilms, 313 North First Street, Ann Arbor.

ON THE NAME *Wolverine*; see *Michigan History*, 35:70 (March, 1951): "Our Wolverine, or 'Glutton,' as the inhabitants of Michigan are nicknamed for some strange reason. . . ." (From Karl Neidhard, *Reise nach Michigan, . . . im Sommer 1834*, published in Leipzig, 1835. See also *Names*, 1:132 (June, 1953) "It should be noted that in English the word 'glutton' was a synonym for wolverine as early as the seventeenth century, and that *Vielfrass* ('glutton') is the only German word for the animal."

THE *Michigan Tradesman* in its August 19, 1953 issue featured the pictorial map of Michigan published recently by the Historical Society of Michigan. The cover of the magazine carried "the most important map of America"—that drawn by John Mitchell of Virginia in 1755 and used to establish the first boundaries of the United States. Included in the issue is an explanation of the two statewide historical agencies in Michigan: the Michigan Historical Commission, with pictures of the commissioners; and the Historical Society of Michigan, with pictures of the society trustees.

DELTA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY at its meeting August 23, at Pioneer Trail Park honored the pioneers of the community at an "Old Settlers' Day" program. A. Theodore Sohlberg, president of the society, welcomed the guests. Speakers interviewed by Charles Follo of Escanaba, a director of the Delta society and president of the Michigan Historical Society, described incidents from the early history of the community. The oldest pioneer present, Charles N. Wood, was 91 years old the day following the meeting. Square dancing with music by three of Delta County's old time fiddlers, was an enjoyable feature of the program.

Book Reviews and Notes

Herbert H. Dow: Pioneer in Creative Chemistry. By Murray Campbell and Harrison Hatton. (New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951. 168 p. Illustrations. \$3.50.)

This is a story of high adventure in the modern manner. The fact that it can be told as the biography of one pioneering and creative spirit carries its own dramatic commentary. "When Herbert Dow built his first little chemical plant, all but a few easy-to-make 'work-horse' chemicals came from Europe, especially Germany. When he died, forty years later (1930), his company alone was making 800 carloads a month of 150 different chemicals, at least three other American companies were even larger, and, most important of all, this country was free of foreign dominance in matters chemical.

We might continue that the revolutionary development has proceeded at an accelerating pace since 1930, and that Mr. Dow might not recognize the place if he returned to Midland in 1953. But this book confines itself to Herbert Dow's lifetime. For the continuation the reader may turn to *Fortune* for May, 1952.

The plan and concept of the book is a happy one. It is a form of biography, a chronicle of an industrial transformation, and a history of a pioneering adventure in the creation of a vital new industry. The brevity of the period is somewhat breath-taking, even in our swift-paced era.

Here, in the person of Mr. Dow, who was graduated from the Case School of Applied Science in Cleveland with an interest in chemical engineering, we have one of the peculiarly American type of genius which has commended itself to our nation in great men like Edison, Ford, and Kettering. Starting with a senior project to study the chemistry of boiler fuels, he discovered brine, and soon became completely engrossed in the challenge of utilizing this cheap and boundless natural resource as the base for new and needed chemical products of ever increasing variety.

Far down under the earth's surface in the vicinity of Midland, lay vast deposits of salt. Firm in Mr. Dow's mind were new processes for economical recovery of this resource and for converting it into new combinations. This book tells how it was done, and of the heartbreaking near defeats which he met in his efforts to secure financial backing, to combine research with practical business operations, and to create markets for his products.

Mr. Dow was not a man to accept defeat, whether it involved money capital, a stubborn problem in research and development, or a ruthless market warfare launched by British or German near-monopolies. Some

of the best chapters in the book relate clearly and with adequate detail "The Battle of the Bleach," "The Bromine War," and the urgent advances made in American chemical manufacture during World War I.

Although much emphasis is placed on the growth of the industry itself, the personality, the faith, and the confident personal philosophy of Herbert Dow color each page, and are given special focus in two of the chapters. They help to explain the solid yet bold philosophy of industry upon which the later growth of the Dow Chemical Company has been founded.

The style and the movement of the book are remarkably lucid, steering a good middle course between a technical book and a popular treatment of a rather abstruse subject. The secret, of course, is the dominant personality of the man himself who gives the human touch to $2\text{NaCl} + 2\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{electricity} = 2\text{NaOH} + \text{Cl}_2 + \text{H}_2$.

University of Michigan

HARLAN HATCHER

Intrastate Migration in Michigan: 1935-1940. By Amos H. Hawley. (University of Michigan Governmental Studies, No. 25) (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1953. 199 p. \$1.50.)

Amos H. Hawley's study is based upon data collected during the 1940 census, which was not duplicated during the census of 1950. It is one of a series of such analyses being made from these data for each of the forty-eight states. The monograph reports and analyzes the volume, direction, and composition of intrastate migration in Michigan during the five years from 1935 to 1940.

The report divides the state into eleven subregions: three metropolitan and eight nonmetropolitan; and classifies migrants by sex, age, marital status, labor force status, occupation, education, and color. It then traces the recorded movement of the various groups to, from, and within the different subregions. Motivating factors considered include the requirements of occupations, the pull of the familiar, and the needs of growing children.

Among his general observations, Mr. Hawley notes a drift from the northern to the southern regions of the state, with the main streams flowing cityward, but stopping in the outlying communities within easy access to the larger cities. There appears a trend to deconcentration in the larger cities themselves, with much of the outward flow stopping in the same easily-reached outskirts. In the cities, the inward flow is comprised largely, but not exclusively, of unattached jobseekers and workers, and the outward flow of family groups and persons not in the active labor market. Unattached women, in general, seem to drift into the city, and unattached men, out of it; urban areas draw professional and

clerical workers; metropolitan fringes attract the more highly educated; nonwhites are relatively stable. Most people apparently prefer to move only short distances, and into regions similar to those from which they are moving.

There are 106 statistical tables, 28 graphical charts, and an index.

Michigan State Library

MABEL GRANNIS

Detroit As The People See It: A Survey Of Attitudes In An Industrial City. By Arthur Kornhauser. (Detroit, Wayne University Press, 1952. x, 221 p. Tables. \$6.00.)

Scholars and laymen often speculate on what the people think and feel about their communities. Dr. Kornhauser's interesting monograph points the way to end such speculation. He has conducted an accurate public opinion survey on what the people of Detroit think and feel about their city. A representative sample of 600 people were polled on their attitudes toward the city and what they thought were the city's main problems. The study therefore provides vital data for scholars, public officials, and those interested in improving community relations.

Fourteen areas of city life were investigated. Among these were: attitudes toward housing conditions, race relations, governmental services, management-labor relations, schools, newspapers, and recreational opportunities in investigating these activities.

Dr. Kornhauser has achieved a remarkable balance of meeting the rigid standards of scholarly research and yet presenting his data so that it is meaningful to the educated layman. The study will make both Detroit "booster" and "knockers" unhappy, for although a substantial minority of the residents have unfavorable attitudes toward the city, the majority feel that Detroit has many positive appeals.

Race relations and housing emerge as the two basic problems about which Detroiters express most dissatisfaction. Education and work opportunities represent areas of greatest satisfaction. The most disturbing finding, however, is that a great number of Detroit citizens feel helpless and indifferent about changing their city. Also deep cleavages divide Detroiters on the issues of race and labor-management relations.

One or two perhaps unavoidable shortcomings characterize the book. The study could have been improved by providing a historical context to some of the attitudes and activities investigated. Also, the student of the city is interested in variations in feelings among the heterogeneous subcommunities that characterize the metropolis. One of the shortcomings of the public opinion method of research is that it neglects these important qualitative areas of study. Despite these deficiencies, this is a good book. Its significance will be heightened if the study is repeated

periodically, so that it may become a bench mark for tracing changing urban attitudes.

Michigan State College

WILLIAM F. FORM

Jewish Communal Institutions in Detroit. By Allen A. Warsen.
(Detroit 1952. 124 p.)

A historical treatment of the development and growth of a community's institutions requires insight and a "feel" for the structural aspects of the community under study. Mr. Warsen's monograph has merit as a digest of material generally available in more detailed form. In form and in substance this study is essentially a condensation of data excerpted from existing studies and reports.

For anyone seeking a brief, readable and somewhat factual account of Jewish community organization in Detroit, this booklet is recommended. Some interesting quotes are provided the reader from sources dealing with Detroit at the turn of the 19th century. These have little applicability to the growth of Jewish communal organizations in Detroit, but do refer to the first Jewish settlers in the area.

The cultural, linguistic, and values differences between the several waves of Jewish immigration to the area are lightly treated. Indeed, the history of communal institutional growth must be quite incomplete without such an orientation on the part of the writer.

There are a number of generalizations which are worthy of mention. One of these emphasizes the importance of the "joinder" of the United Jewish Charities with the Detroit Community Fund by stating, "it helped break down prejudice and establish better relations with the non-Jewish community." (p. 44) Without tangible evidence that the merger, in fact, accomplished this result, such a sweeping generalization should, perhaps, be omitted.

There are some instances in which information is either sketchy or entirely omitted. The Jewish Children's Home in existence some seventeen years (1923-1940) is not mentioned in the monograph.

Reference should be made to the plea for a Bureau of Jewish Education presented so eloquently in the closing pages of the book. A comprehensive study of the need for such a device in Detroit was made in 1944-45 by Eli Picheny and others. No mention of this report or its conclusions are included here.

Mr. Warsen's monograph is useful as summarizing at least the more important facts concerning Jewish communal institutions in Detroit. Nevertheless in this reviewer's opinion it also proves the necessity for a really thoroughgoing historical document on the growth and development of Jewish communal institutions in Detroit.

Wayne University

LOUIS L. FRIEDLAND

Broadax and Bayonet. By Francis P. Prucha. (Madison, State Historical Society of Wisconsin. 1953. Illustrations, bibliography and index. 264 p. \$4.00.)

Doctor Prucha has presented a carefully documented and scholarly account of the impact of the regular army on an area that might be called the Post War of 1812 Northwest. Chronological delineation of the period before the Civil War was necessary because of the inactivation of nearly all of the frontier posts within the selected area of the modern states of Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and northern Illinois. In spite of the catchy title, it should be emphasized that the author does not deal directly with military activities in the sense of combat, and, indeed, truly observes that they have been at least partially recorded elsewhere.

One of the theses of the book demonstrates that contemporary recruiters' slogans should have been "Join the Army—go West to Work." Work the soldiers did, under the direction of some of the finest engineers of the land—West Point trained officers. With muster rolls liberally larded with soldiers who had been artisans of all descriptions in civilian life, the army could and did enter an undeveloped area and erect the various frontier posts, often without civilian aid. This by no means ended the soldiers' labors: there were roads to be built, wood to be cut, gardens to be tended, herds to be watched—in short, all the work of pioneer settlers in addition to purely military activities.

Besides the tremendous economic benefit, the influence of these officers and men, scattered over the dozen or so forts, building roads, carrying mail, offering medical and religious services and countless other activities, permeated the frontier and pioneer communities. Even cultural influences were experienced through the regimental bands, soldier theatricals, post schools (mainly for children of the personnel of the forts), and post libraries.

However, relations between the military and civilians were not always cordial. The greatest friction was caused by the civilians illegally selling whiskey to the soldiers. The author recounts one incident that army veterans of any age should appreciate—a laundry detail outside the post gates dipped a blanket in whisky, casually carried it into the fort mixed in with the wet wash and safely wrung out their ingeniously won reward.

Apart from the fact that part of the area was within the onetime boundaries of Michigan Territory, the book occasionally touches certain areas of Michigan proper and should be of value not just to persons interested in the history of the Old Northwest or the army, but also to those interested in Michigan history.

Michigan State College

ALEC R. GILPIN

Contributors

Dr. F. Clever Bald is assistant director of the Michigan Historical Collections at the University of Michigan and lecturer in history. He is also historian of the Washtenaw Historical Society and a member of its board of directors. Dr. Bald is the author of *The Great Fire of 1805*, one in a series of booklets produced by the Education Committee of Detroit's 250th Birthday Festival; *The French Seigniorship at Sault Ste. Marie*; and *Detroit's First American Decade*. He has just completed his writing of Michigan history under the John M. Munson bequest to the Michigan Historical Commission.

Eugene T. Petersen is an instructor for the University of Michigan extension service, residing at Flint. His undergraduate work was done at Marquette University. After receiving a master of arts degree from that institution, Dr. Petersen spent three years as a history instructor at the University of Detroit. He received the doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Michigan in 1953. The article which is published in this issue of *Michigan History* composed part of his doctoral dissertation, "The History of the Conservation of Wildlife in Michigan, 1859-1921."

Miss Agnes Miller was born in New York City. She is a graduate of Barnard College and received a master's degree from Columbia University. As a writer her special interest is in the field of American history. She is a member of the New York Historical Society.

Lena London is working for a doctor of philosophy degree at Columbia University under the direction of Henry Steele Commager. She was graduated cum laude from Hunter College and received the Thomas Hunter award in history from that institution. Afterwards she received her master of arts degree from Clark University where she had a scholarship and then a fellowship. Miss London is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and of Alpha Chi Alpha, the honorary social science society at Hunter College.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946.

Of Michigan History magazine published quarterly at Lansing, Michigan, for December, 1953. State of Michigan, County of Ingham, ss.

Before me, a notary public, in and for the state and county aforesaid, personally appeared Lewis Beeson, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the editor of the Michigan History magazine and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Acts of March 3, 1933 and July 2, 1946, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to-wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher and editor are: publisher, Michigan Historical Commission, Lansing, Michigan; editor, Lewis Beeson, Lansing, Michigan; managing editors and business managers, none.

2. That the owner is: the Michigan Historical Commission, Lansing, Michigan; Chester W. Ellison, president, Lansing; Prentiss M. Brown, vice-president, Detroit; Lewis Beeson, executive secretary, Lansing. No stock.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and the other security holders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: none.

Lewis Beeson, *Editor.*

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 16th day of September, 1953.

Lillian M. Phelan, *Notary Public.*

My commission expires September 6, 1955.

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The Historical Society of Michigan is an organization maintained and managed by Michigan citizens who are interested in the history of their state. It includes teachers, business men, professional people, and others who write history, study history, or just enjoy reading history. Its purpose is to encourage historical research and publication and to foster local historical societies throughout the state. Membership dues are \$3.00 per year. *Michigan History* is sent to each member.

The Michigan Historical Commission is an official state body, consisting of six members appointed by the Governor. It was first established by an act of the legislature in 1913. The Commission is custodian of the state's archives; it compiles, edits, and publishes Michigan materials; and seeks to cultivate, through the Historical Society of Michigan and other groups, a continuing interest in the history of Michigan from the early times to the present.

Michigan History is a quarterly journal containing articles by qualified writers on Michigan subjects, reviews of books related to Michigan and its past, and news of historical activities in the state. Contributions are invited. Manuscripts should be submitted to the Editor, Michigan Historical Commission, Lansing 13, Michigan.

The Commission maintains at Lansing the Michigan Historical Museum, a rich storehouse of artifacts and documents related to the history of the state.

Among the activities of the Commission and the Society are the following: an annual meeting is held each year in October, at which tours and talks on Michiganiana are enjoyed; books and pamphlets are published from time to time; a conference on the teaching of Michigan materials is held annually; historical celebrations are encouraged in various parts of the state; a program of marking historical places is sponsored; guidance is provided to local governmental and state agencies on the destruction of useless records and the preservation of records having historical value.